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GREAT THINKERS

The Quest of Life for its Meaning

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BY

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TO THE MEMORY OF

MARY

PREFACE

To one whose interest is aroused by the drama of human history, the life ideals of great thinkers play roles of unrivaled importance. He sees men of various temperaments and abilities in the midst of perplexities and difficulties struggling with ignorance and prejudice for the sanities of life, men who left the record of their successes and their failures as a heritage for us who have followed. Time has proved it is a heritage one can ill afford to ignore. For if the reflective wisdom of the past renders no other service than to free our minds of the burden of outworn theories and opinions, mistaken loyalties and cramping, sterile dogmas, its value to the world would be beyond estimate. But its great positive service lies in its pointing the direction in which clear-minded men saw light, the sources from which they drew reinforcements that sustained them in the crises of life. Keeping the philosophy of life abreast of the insights that come from every quarter, from the past as well as from the present, continues to be the unfinished business of education for everyone.

In the writer's experience, the best approach to the thought of a Plato, of an Aristotle, a Kant, or of any other great thinker is by way of inquiring how the thought arose and took form in the thinker's mind, and what it all meant to him as he was feeling his way to his conclusion. Not what it meant to him when his thought was completely worked out and he was presenting his conclusions in systematic form for the technical reader.

The system is indispensable, of course, but too little of the significant part of the thinker's message is caught in the meshes of the system. It would be great gain for the untechnical reader of philosophy were he able to stand in imagination beside the thinker as he faced his problem, to note his mental and temperamental peculiarities, to envisage the intellectual and social environment that he had to reckon with, to locate his reflective point of view with its peculiar outlook, and, above all, to catch, if possible, his vision as he saw his way out of his difficulties. Only then can the reader really understand the thinker's problem and interpret his message.

In the pages which follow the writer has undertaken to trace some of the ideas and ideals of the great seminal thinkers that have entered into the structure of civilization and helped to shape our culture and our lives. He has gone no farther into the exposition of the systems of philosophy concerned than was necessary to exhibit and interpret their spirit and motive and to indicate the directions in which life's meaning and value had been sought; for these give the clue to what is vital in any system of philosophy. The controlling aim has been twofold: to show that the great speculative systems were the natural outcome of man's struggle to understand himself and his place in the universe, and to make clear that, in the intellectual life, there is no hope of progress, or even of security in the present, without taking into account the successes and the failures of the past.

This story of the quest for life's meaning is told for what it may be worth to those who are themselves endeavoring to see life steadily and see it whole. For that reason the book has been written to be read, all references and citations that would divert the reader's attention being consistently omitted from the text.

I gladly take this occasion to acknowledge the friendly interest of many of my former students in the work, and to express my grateful appreciation to Mrs. Doris Williamson Stephens for her competent help in preparing the manuscript for the press. Above all I am indebted to my wife for her unfailing co-operation. The work would not have been written but for her spurring encouragement and counsel.

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GREAT THINKERS

CHAPTER ONE

HAST ANY PHILOSOPHY IN THEE, SHEPHERD?

The philosopher has to defend the humanity in man.
AMIEL

The essence of intellectual living does not reside in extent of science or in perfection of expression, but in a constant preference of higher thoughts over lower thoughts, and this preference may be the habit of a mind which has not any very considerable amount of information.
PHILIP G. HAMERTON

In the sixth century before the Christian era, philosophy first entered upon its historic task by raising the question concerning the ultimate nature and composition of the physical universe. The question was raised in the Greek city of Miletus, on the western coast of Asia Minor at a time when Athens was as yet little known and of small consequence. The specifically human problem was not involved in those early discussions, for man was treated simply as any other part of nature, and accounted for in terms of physical forces. But in the latter part of the fifth century, after philosophy had reached Athens, speculation got round to the consideration of man and his place in the cosmic scheme as a special problem, and for the thinkers of Athens, and for those in succeeding centuries who followed the Socratic tradition, the problem of the meaning and the worth of human life became the central problem of speculative interest.

These two conceptions of philosophy, coming down side by side through the years, inevitably brought into philosophical doctrine great variety, and even divergent tendencies, which have been a source of no little confusion among non-technical readers. Why this endless logomachy and fruitless system-building? Why, after twenty-five centuries of speculation is there no authentic philosophy comparable to the sciences of chemistry, physics, mathematics, astronomy? Why are there even at this day as many systems of philosophy as there are philosophers? This is an old question, one that goes back to the root of what is most distinctive in the intent and the method of science, as well as of philosophy, and that merits a more extended consideration than it usually receives.

Science and philosophy are two wholly different intellectual enterprises which must of necessity part company at the start, for they move in different directions and have different objectives. The task which science sets for itself, whatever may be the subject-matter which it investigates, is the systematic description of facts *as facts.* Description is the sole concern of science, and observation is the method which it employs for that purpose. Experiment is merely a supplementary method for extending and giving better control of the conditions for observation. Science analyzes, but it analyzes in order to observe and describe what its analysis reveals. Even causal explanation, which is the method of inductive science, is simply the tracing of the invariable connection of antecedence and sequence observed in our experience of things, and thus becomes a descriptive process. Restricting itself to the descriptive aspects of experience, where progress may be measured by objective standards, the task which science sets for itself is a relatively simple one; and when the field of experience was portioned out to the special sciences for investigation, the task was still further simplified. Such is the strategic position of science. The strategy of Cæsar, it will be remembered, was to divide the enemy's forces, and to conquer them one by one, and Descartes, at the beginning of the modern era, recommended the same procedure as the proper strategy of the intellect in seeking to master the facts of experience. Following this maxim the progress of the various sciences has been steady and their results have been checked by the tests of experience. But science, and more particularly the special sciences, have to keep the limited range of their findings constantly in mind. For, seeking to master the aspect of things that fall within its field of vision, each science abstracts its interest and attention from all other aspects. In doing so, its observations and the generalizations based on these observations hold good only within the restricted sphere marked out by the abstraction. Its findings concern only the quality, the quantity, and the sequence of events, and its generalizations are such as are warranted by these findings only. Predictability is the ultimate aim of science, and to realize that aim the task is kept as simple and as objective as possible.

On the other hand, the task which from the first was set for philosophy was far from simple and easy, for the problems of philosophy spring not from the nature of things but from the nature of the mind itself, and from its needs when faced by the world of things; and these problems increase in complexity as civilization advances. If the human mind did not give intelligible patterns and rational coherence to its sense data in the process of perceiving; if the mind did not carry the funded meaning of the past into the experiences of the present, thereby giving more extended meaning and purpose to experience; if the mind were not intellectually curious about the how and the why of things; and, especially, if man were content merely to live on the animal plane in terms of sense satisfactions only, and felt no concern for ideals and reverences, there would never have been such a thing as philosophy. Nor, indeed, would there have been any science, any art, any morals or religion, any social institutions, history, culture, or civilization. Philosophy is concerned about the humanity in man: nothing human is alien to it, and nothing that jeopardizes the integrity of man is indifferent to it.

Here, then, is the situation that faces the philosopher: Man lives in a world shot through and through with meaning for his thought and with value for his action. These two — meaning and value — are the ordinate and abscissa of the universe within which he lives and moves, and all his concerns as a rational being are reckoned in terms of them. Indeed, his intelligence is measured by the way he appreciates them and orders his life by them. Life for him is one long adventure with facts for the sake of the meanings and the values which the facts possess for him.

But meanings and values bring many puzzles with them. What do we mean by meaning, and what is its relation to fact? Then, meaning is a rather slippery affair. A thing may mean one thing to one person and another thing to another person. A thing may even mean different things at different times to the same person. What then does the thing really mean? Is meaning of the essence of things, or does meaning merely happen to things? In either case, what is truth and how is knowledge possible? The same questions may be raised concerning values. What are the so-called 'eternal meanings' and 'eternal values'? Such are the problems of philosophy, and there are many more of the same sort. They are all subjective in origin, rooting deep in the needs of human life, and their definitive solutions still await the final judgment of history.

Meaning calls for understanding, and to understand is to see a lesser meaning in the light of a wider, more inclusive meaning. Understanding, then, becomes the basic interest of the intellectual life, and, for that reason, the main objective of philosophy. What is the method of understanding and by what criterion are its findings judged?

The matter is really very simple. What one refers to as his mind is in fact the total system of meanings (the funded meanings of his past experiences as they live on in the functioning of the conscious organism), lying in the dim background of consciousness. Every experience which enters the foreground of consciousness is projected over against this background of funded meaning, and the two make up the content of consciousness of the moment. In so far as pertinent aspects of this background become contextual fringe of the experience, it lends familiarity, meaning, intelligibility to the experience. To think is to explore the interconnections in one's store of funded meaning. To reflect is to rummage about in this store of meaning for those pertinent contextual factors that yield a wider range of meaning. Finally, to understand is to grasp the experience, together with its contextual setting, as a new experience, and make it an integral part of the mind's growing fund of meaning. Philosophy is the art of understanding, and interpretation is the method of that art.

This thought may be formulated in more general terms. Every attempt to understand or interpret involves, consciously or unconsciously, the assumption of some point of view from which the interpretation is made. Human intelligence seems to be a point-of-view-taking affair, and in every act of the mind, the point of view determines the outlook and the resulting vision. Each of one's culture-interests that have become organized and habitual becomes a possible point of view from which some aspect of reality may be interpreted and appreciated by him. The personal equation of the interpreter, his established meaning-attitudes and value-attitudes, inevitably affect his understanding and appreciation of things. The history of philosophy is a revelation of the number and variety of points of view from which unity and completeness have been sought in our conception of life as a whole. That each system has its merits is obvious; that each has its limitations is equally obvious.

The great commandment for philosophy is to be tolerant. Every consistent theory is important when its peculiar point of view is taken into account. The thinker who proposes the theory undertakes to tell what he has been able to see from his angle of vision. But when that limiting condition is forgotten or ignored, that importance vanishes. Leibniz, to whom we owe the term ' point-of-view,' made this distinction clear in his maxim — Every philosophy is true in what it affirms, but false in what it denies. Theory must beware lest overconfidence cause it to over-step the bounds of propriety, and trespass on territory where it has no warrant. That is the all too frequent error that both philosophers and scientists have made in violation of their own principles, not to mention the partizans in less technical fields. Galileo as a scientist was scrupulously careful in his observations, and was just as careful that his inferences should not go beyond the bounds set by his science. But the zeal of the Inquisition for their own point of view rendered them indifferent to what Galileo saw, and even incapable of respecting the jurisdiction of his point of view.

The superiority of one point of view over another depends on its affording a broader sweep of vision and a truer perspective of the situation to be interpreted. In philosophy it is a way of looking at things as a whole, of bringing all the pertinent facts together under one unifying conception that renders to each its rightful place and value. Obviously, in philosophy, a point of view is a hypothetical affair, a projected principle of interpretation whose sole value lies in this service which it renders. Seen in this light, philosophical systems are just so many conceivable points of vantage, from which the final interpretation of life and the universe has been sought.

The conjectural character of philosophy's procedure, and the method of testing its results, are often illustrated by more objective enterprises in other fields of inquiry. About sixty years ago a young English archeologist, engaged in uncovering the remains of an ancient city in Assyria, came upon the ruins of a temple, and on the marble floor of one of the rooms he found the shattered fragments of what appeared to have been a memorial tablet. It was, apparently, a hopeless ruin. With painstaking care all the fragments were gathered up, even to the smallest particles, and spread out upon a table. Then began the long, tedious, seemingly impossible task of fitting these fragments together, each in its right place until, finally, the tablet lay before him completely reconstructed. Then it was discovered that the inscription on the tablet was in a dialect unfamiliar to philologists. The meaning of the inscription lay hidden in the forgotten use of some wedge-shaped characters, which taken by themselves meant nothing. Here was sore need for more interpretation. Summoning what he knew of oriental languages and oriental history, he ventured one construction after another, seeking for an opening into the hidden meaning. He would know that he was on the right track only when his conjectures began to make sense. Little by little fragments of meaning began to appear, until the whole meaning was integrated and the message of the tablet was recovered.

The story of philosophy's age-long struggle to understand the meaning of human life and of the world is virtually the record of man's great adventure on earth. Better than the unfinished story of Rudyard Kipling's imagination, this would be the finest story in the world if told by one who understood. Civilization would lose in the telling its conventional status, and would become for us the hard-earned but temporary stage of human progress in man's pushing forward. Culture would mean any and all of the material and spiritual agencies for increasing light and power in human life, and science would appear in its proper role as the one method by which the kind of order is brought into the welter of things and happenings that enables us to predict the oncoming event, and thus gives us control over the forces of nature. And finally we would be able to see that all those deeper experiences, all those spiritual insights that admit us into the heart of things, are not separate and complete in themselves, but are parts of one all-inclusive experience, uniting us with the whole human race. Religion, art, philosophy, music — all the voices of the universal in man, would then come into their own, each speaking in its own way for the whole of man.

The living core of philosophy, out from which every system grows, is a very human and understandable affair, but for its understanding and appreciation more is required than is furnished by the system itself. Systems give only the results of the thinker's labors, with all the elements of human interest carefully weeded out. Systems of philosophy are written for philosophers, not for those seeking light on life's problems, who are willing to learn how other thinkers have met and solved them. If one thinks a man's philosophy is worth understanding at all, one should endeavor to recover the man's vision, to see the system in the making, and to discover the motives which inspired it. For in the issues of life, to understand how a problem has come to be a problem is part of the solving of it.

For ages it has been the cherished dream of great thinkers to discover the long-sought point of view from which the real and the ideal are seen in their true natures as two dimensions of the one great fact. But all originality is relative. All that any philosopher has been able to accomplish has been to make his contribution to the insight and understanding that has grown from age to age. The human situation seems to be too complex to be grasped once for all in a single formula, and it grows in complexity with the years. Probably no one saw this more clearly than did Plato who entertained no hope of setting down in writing and transmitting to others what he most deeply felt and thought concerning the nature of the good life. But Plato laid no claim to have given the final solution to the human problem.

‘There is no writing on this subject, nor ever shall be,’ he said. ‘It is not capable of expression like other branches of study. . . . If I thought it could be written down adequately and thus given to the world, what finer occupation could I have had in life than to write down what would be of great service to mankind, and to reveal the nature of life to all men.’

No doubt, the refusal of all absolutes is, for the philosopher, the beginning of wisdom, inasmuch as it sets the limits of thought within the range of the possibilities of life. It is by no means the last word, however. For the absolute is legitimately used as a limit-notion, and when so used it is the indispensable postulate of every thinker whose intellectual ambition is to take the destiny of mankind consciously and intelligently into account. Plato was only one of the first to seek the way of the good life. His confession that in seeking to measure the depth of life’s meaning, his reach must ever exceed his grasp, indicates wherein he was ‘least Greek of all the Greeks.’ In the chapters which follow is given the story of those who were more hopeful than he of reaching the ultimate point of view and the vision that completely satisfies. The story of their efforts, of their successes and their failures, is much more than the story of philosophy, in the conventional sense. Taken broadly, it is the inner, living thread of history itself. He who would know how the modern world has arrived at the point at which it now stands, with all its ideals and cultures together with its unsolved problems, should follow the struggle of the human mind to integrate the fragments of life, and to read its meaning, as told in the story of philosophy.

CHAPTER TWO

HOW GAUTAMA BUDDHA LOOKED AT LIFE

The odors of flowers, of sandalwood, and the fragrance of frankincense and jasmine travel with the wind, but not against it; but the sweet odor of a good man travels with the wind and against it.

Whoso acts or speaks or thinks with pure mind, his happiness attends as his faithful shadow.

GAUTAMA

The sixth century B.C. will always stand out in world history because of a singular coincidence. In three widely separated lands, and in three totally different civilizations which knew nothing of each other, there originated three major culture-movements which have shaped the thought and action of untold millions down to the present day. In India it was the Buddhist way of life, which gave way in the land of its birth to the original tradition of Hinduism, but is still dominant in many lands of the Far East. In China, it was Confucianism, which continues to be the determining element in Chinese mentality. And in Greece, it was speculative philosophy, on whose basic concepts our Western culture and civilization have always built. Each movement marked a sudden poignant awakening to some aspect of the human problem and the beginning of a new center of interest in human history. The mere fact of such a striking coincidence is, in itself, significant, but of no special importance. That twenty-five hundred years ago, the problem of human life came to clear, reflective consciousness in the East and in the West is, for human progress, a matter of unrivaled importance. For it dates the beginning of the systematic effort to bring sanity and coherence into the business of living.

Siddharta Gautama, later given the title of Buddha, was a youth of the warrior line of the Sakya clan who were settled near the border of Nepal at the foot of the Himalayas, about one hundred miles north of Benares. He sprang from a people, popularly known as the Aryans, who, some five hundred years earlier, pushed through the mountain passes from the northwest into the fertile plains of northeastern India, driving the less aggressive Dravidian inhabitants before them.

As reflected in their early Vedic folk-songs, these Aryan invaders were of free, roving disposition, loving life and being satisfied with the faith and practices of a simple nature-worship. But by the sixth century they had given up their nomadic habits, were settled in towns and villages with an established social organization. The greatest change, however, was in their world-view and outlook of life. Their childlike nature-worship had given place to a pantheistic conception of one unseen fundamental being, and a conception of life in which the law of Karma and the rigid rule of caste were the dominant elements. The essentials of Hindu mentality, which has known no change, already colored the thought and action of the people in every department of life.

When any great spiritual movement springs solely from the reflective genius of one mind, we have some measure of the greatness of that mind. The greatness of Gautama lay in a certain detachment — a capacity for making the sorrows and frustrations of others his very own, and a willingness to take upon himself the burden of human misery as his own personal problem. His own condition in life was far removed from the human situation of the masses. He was of the noble class, son and heir to the authority of the local prince, surrounded by the comforts and luxuries of his time, happily married and the father of a newborn son. Humanly speaking, Gautama should have been the most contented of men. His kinswoman's song of greeting at the moment he is secretly planning his great renunciation gives us the measure of the man's resolute purpose:

> Happy the father, happy the mother,
> Happy the wife of such a son and husband.

India, even in that day, was the land of pain and repression. There was no escape from the bitterness of war and plunder, the misery of poverty and hunger, the certainty of old age, disease, and death. And after these, Karma and endless reincarnations. No man was the master of his own fate. He was the victim of a cosmic law that is inexorable. In all the universe there was but one way of escape from the misery and the futility of the human situation — the discovery of the eternal truth of life, Dharma, and, through its possession, the attainment of Nirvana.

On the night that Gautama turned his back on home and a life of ease and started on his quest for Dharma, he had already proved to his own mind the futility of the hedonist's proposed way of escape. At the age of twenty-nine he had learned that pleasure solves no problems. The awakened mind finds that wounds struck by reason can be healed by reason alone.

It did not take long for Gautama to discover that the accumulated wisdom of his people, in the possession of the Brahmin priesthood, had nothing even faintly resembling the Dharma he was seeking. The wisdom of life, he had already come to believe, would be no easy conquest. It would be won only through prolonged struggle and self-conquest.

The Western mind has never been quite at home with asceticism even when the motive has been the discipline of the feelings and the building of character. The nearest we come to the practice of self-mortification is the occasional excursion into the primitive as an escape from the cluttered life of the city. There is, indeed, even a peculiar zest in hardship and privation, in the aching of knotted muscles, in hunger and cold, when we see in them the challenge to our endurance, but only when the assured comfort and plenty of civilization lie just ahead.

Indian asceticism has never been playful, nor has it sprung from ethical motives. Its root has been ontological. Even in the early days of Gautama, the essential evil nature of matter was the central teaching of the religion of Jainism. According to this sect, the cause of all human misery is the union of soul and body in man, which must always be at war with each other. A rigid and uncompromising asceticism is, accordingly, the only way to assert the supremacy of the spirit and to win freedom from the evils of the flesh.

For six years Gautama, wandering silent and alone, sought his Dharma along the ascetic way of privation and self-denial until his exhausted frame could endure no more, and he fell fainting to the ground. And Gautama accepted this as proof of the failure of asceticism itself as the way of enlightenment.

It is not difficult to imagine what must have been the course of Gautama's reflections as he sat under the Bo tree pondering the quest he had undertaken and the fruitless outcome of his long and painful vigil. We have no record of his thoughts, but we do know something of St. Jerome's experiences as he struggled with temptations in his lonely cell. An empty mind is never a free mind, and a weakened body gives rein to unhealthy imaginings and opens the doors to the demons of temptation. The spirit is never more completely at the mercy of the flesh than when the will has been weakened by ascetic practices.

Thoughts such as these must have come to Gautama's mind, for they are the psychological condition for the swift enlightenment which came to him on the night he sat under the Bo tree. In that flash he saw that the sorrows and miseries of life exist for us only so long as we are conscious of them. The secret of Dharma is not in the conquest of the body, but in the control of the mind — in the will to think. The problems of life are not in the situations which face us on every side, but are the thoughts we entertain about these situations. They are children of our own wrong thinking. They disappear through right thinking. Hence the need of a technique of right thinking. Hence the need of an elaborate system of thought-control, which can be taught, which can be learned, and which can be practiced as an art.

This Dharma, upon analysis, proves to be a simple, psychological solution of the ancient problem of the cause and cure of evil, which took form in Gautama's mind as four fundamental truths:

> Human life inevitably entails suffering.
> The origin of suffering is craving, desire.
> Escape from suffering lies in escape from desire.
> Freedom from desire comes from right thinking.

That is to say, the problem of human life is a purely psychological affair, involving nothing beyond the happiness of the individual. The origin and nature of the world we live in, the possibilities of human achievement and the need for social betterment were matters wholly beyond the limits of Gautama's thought and interest. No doubt metaphysical issues overtaxed his capacity. His mind seemed better qualified to dissect the concrete and bitter fruits of actual life than to follow the logical implications of his thought to their conclusions. And like many others who feel deeply the bitterness of sorrow, and whose minds cannot rise above the mere facts of immediate experience, his Way of Salvation, his Dharma amounted to little more than a mental therapeutic against worry and suffering.

The art of right thinking, and, consequently, the art of right doing also, is mastered in eight steps, as set forth in the doctrine of the Eight-fold Path, which, Gautama pointed out, was a middle way between the path of sense enjoyment and the path of ascetic self-denial. As this doctrine contains the positive and constructive part of Buddhist philosophy, and continues to this day to be the basis and warrant for Buddhist practice, it merits detailed exposition.

The first step in the direction of complete deliverance from the evils of life is taken when one stedfastly holds (1) Right Views of life and world. 'Come, then, think of the world as a quicksand where fools are sinking, where wise men find no pleasure.' Thought is the helmsman of life; it sends us through safe channels to the open sea, or it misses the way and piles us up on the rocks. Only the truth of Dharma can save life from disaster. Superstition, the illusion of a permanent self, the deceitful appeals of the senses and the belief in the efficacy of rites and ceremonies — these lead only to increased sorrow and pain. The next step is taken when one has definitely curbed natural inclination, and has established himself firmly in (2) Right Aspirations. Having surrendered worldly hopes and personal ambitions, he can say: my heart is fixed, O Buddha, my heart is fixed. His heart's inclinations, no longer self-centered, are those of good-will and benevolence. With head and heart established in the way of the good life, the next step is in the direction of (3) Right Speech. When he has mastered this difficult art, he is truthful, frank, he avoids uncharitable, foolish talk, and knows the wisdom of silence. ' Better than a thousand empty words is one pregnant word which brings to the hearer peace.' And then, overt action being inevitable, the next step (4) involves the application of the moral mandates governing behavior, summed up in the doctrine of Right Conduct. These include the general moral precepts binding on all laymen, and also the special ones binding only on the members of the brotherhood. The next step involves the selection and the pursuing of (5) Right Livelihood, abstaining from callings which debase character, and engaging in such occupations as promote peace and happiness. All these preceding steps lead to the cultivation of the will, but so important is it that these will-attitudes be firmly fixed, special attention to the matter should be given to the necessity of maintaining (6) Right Effort. There should never be any let-up in watchfulness over the mind. ' Desire waxes great in him who is oppressed by wandering thought.' ' Better one day of earnest effort than a thousand years of sloth and lassitude.' And above all, keep ever in mind that we live in the enemy's country, and let every one who feels safe take heed lest he fall. Then, (7) Right Mindfulness. 'Think not lightly of evil, saying, " it will not come nigh me." Drop by drop the pitcher is filled; slowly but surely the fool is saturated with evil.' And finally, implying the mastery of all the preceding steps, the next step, (8) Right Meditation, perfects the method of Dharma in the state of mystic realization of the goal — Nirvana.

The core of Gautama's philosophy, where his various teachings have been reduced to a coherent system, is the Law of Impermanence which rules inexorably all forms of existence. Nothing in the universe abides unchanged, self-identical from moment to moment. The flowing river and the flying clouds are merely visible instances of the universal law. The process of growth in trees, plants, and animals overpasses our powers of perception, but the process goes on, nevertheless. Even the granite in the everlasting hills is slowly wasting away. The fact of existence is undoubted, but it is an endless becoming and perishing, an oscillation between existence and non-existence. Even the self which we are, which begins in infancy, develops in its contacts with the world outside, and takes character in its changing attitudes toward persons and things, is all there is of us.

Gautama was here making a deliberate and intentional departure from the central tenet of Brahmin tradition, which was in that day, as it is in the present, the cornerstone of Hindu thought and faith. This tradition, which was given a speculative form in the Upanishads, dates back to the great hymn of the Mantric Age addressed to the Supreme Spirit, giving in picturesque and mystical language the Hindu story of the creation. Out from the one, all-embracing, Absolute Being, afterward known as Brahm, all things, material and spiritual, sprang, by ‘ inward fervor.’ Brahm is the one and only permanent and unchanging existence, the original source and the ultimate goal of finite souls. Compared with the Supreme One, the visible world is unreal and illusory.

It is but a step from this point to the heart of the human problem, as Gautama saw it. The Law of Impermanence is the law of the universe. It is therefore the law of life. To be fully possessed by that great truth is to find Dharma. To bring all the thoughts and impulses and conduct of life under the sway of this Dharma is to become an Arahat — to have attained the blessed state of Nirvana.

But the drift of actual life is set in the opposite direction. We human beings build on the assumption of permanence, and wage increasing warfare against the ravages of waste and decay. Especially do we shrink from every infringement of our personality. We instinctively assume that the goal of life and civilization is self-gratification, self-expansion. We turn from the Law of Impermanence as from life's great enemy, and we pit our feeble strength against it, with the inevitable result that life, suffering one defeat after another, is thrown out of adjustment and disorganized. And the bitter fruit of all this is the pain and misery that crowd our days. Gautama had a pathetic horror of pain and suffering.

To accept the Law of Impermanence as the law of life; to surrender oneself to it and to feel oneself carried on as a part of the universal flow — this is the way of deliverance and peace. One's self, which seems so permanent and secure in its unity, is but a composition of distinguishable mental states which perish moment by moment. The values of such a life are but the assessments of a supposed permanent self, and therefore call for a transvaluation. The empirical self, real enough in the phenomenal sense, with all its interests and concerns, should be put and kept in its rightful place. And the acquisitive impulse and the urge to self aggrandizement should give way to the habits and attitudes of mind that follow from treading the Eight-fold Path.

The limits of Gautama's thought were sharply defined. He definitely repudiated the idea of a soul as a spiritual entity, although he admitted the psychological existence of the empirical self. He had neither religious nor speculative use for the idea of God. There was no place for worship or reverence for unseen powers in his system. Questions of ontology had no interest for him. When his favorite follower would know if the Law of Impermanence ruled beyond the grave, Gautama had no answer. Such speculations, he held, only feed the flames of desire, and show a divided mind. It is enough to know that all real problems of life are problems of the here and now, and the solution of these is possible in terms already given in experience.

It was impossible, however, to keep the implications of Gautama's thought within the limits of his phenomenalistic creed. His earlier followers, indeed, pointed out that the phenomena of memory and attention, as well as the recognized doctrine of responsibility for one's deeds (Karma), clearly involved a principle of unity and identity which survived all change. But Gautama's mind never worked its way to clearness over these points. The Four Noble Truths ruled his thought to the end, and set limits to his credo, but his moral personality suffused the life ideal within these limits with moral implications which carried far beyond. A little reflection would show that one could not accept the Eight-fold Path without assuming a rational framework for life and a moral world-order. Here was one of those instances, not infrequent in the history of philosophy, where the logic of a man's growing life broke through the logic of his system.

Two ideas of Brahminic origin, which were too strongly rooted in Indian consciousness to be ignored, were destined to play leading roles in Gautama's philosophy of life. One was the idea of rebirth in another life, Samsāra (reincarnation), the roots of which ran back in the Upanishads, and the other was the idea of the fruits of one's deeds in this life determining the status and the fortune of the reincarnated life — Karma. Taken together, these ideas were well calculated to fill the Indian mind with apprehension and horror in the face of future existence.

These two ideas took new meaning and importance at the hands of Gautama. For him there could be no transmigration of souls and, consequently, there could be no rebirth, in the then accepted sense of the term. But something undoubtedly did pass from one life at death to the life of the newborn, something that was the bearer of the consequences of one life for the other. What is this something which abides through change? This was a question which taxed the ingenuity of Gautama's followers from the beginning. The master's own words threw a dubious light on the matter, and his disciples, puzzled, resorted to similes to help the situation. Life is like the flame of a candle, said one. In lighting one candle from another, the flame passes from one to the other. The candles are different, but the flame remains the same. Even in this life, the conscious self is like a river, which maintains one constant form, one seeming identity, although not a single drop remains today of all the water that composed the river yesterday. So, also, in human life, when the five aggregates which constitute the empirical individual disappear at death, something continues which forms the bond or linkage of causation which determines the destiny of the new life. It has been suggested that it is a man's character, the moral force of his personality, which passes on to another's life and becomes his Karma. But character, apart from the empirical individual, is a mere abstraction and not a force. In one of the early authorities, the something which passes on is described as ineffable (avacya), transcendent, whose nature overpasses our power to comprehend. But this interpretation, confessedly, carries the matter into the field of ontology, and this, for Gautama, is stepping out of bounds.

The individual, at birth, said Gautama, is like a garden already planted. The impulses and the motives which spring up in him and shape his life and conduct are forces of the past living on in him. He has freedom of choice, of course, but this freedom plays within the limits set for him by his Karma. The way of deliverance, as laid down in the doctrine of the Eight-fold Path, rests squarely on the assumption that the individual, within the limits of his destiny, may become the master of his fate, through the voluntary control of his mental attitudes. Thus, the garden of his life may be zealously cultivated, the weeds of evil desire destroyed as they spring up, and the tender shoots of noble desire carefully nurtured.

Leaving the way of darkness let the wise man follow the way of light:
Let him leave home for the homeless life,
Seeking the solitude which the carnal mind can never love.
Let him put away lust and the craving for earthly possessions.
Let the wise man cleanse himself of every evil thought.

And the Nirvana which Gautama holds out to the wise man in these words is, theoretically, within the reach of any man, because both conditions and reward lie wholly within the circle of his own inner life. But actually, the goal was recognized by the master to be beyond the reach of all save the favored few endowed with the adequate capacity for ' right effort ' and for those few only who lived in solitude, withdrawn from the incitements and temptations of domestic life. It is no accident that consistent Buddhism has been identified with the belief and practices of monasticism wherever it has survived. But by Gautama himself, and more completely by his followers after his death, provision was made for the moral training of laymen who had no hope of Nirvana.

Any just estimate of Gautama's philosophy of life must, at the start, make due acknowledgment of its ethical spirit. Gautama made the great discovery that the heart is emancipated through love. But this love, perhaps better named good-will, was impersonal, like that of Spinoza, taking no special object, and asking nothing in return. If this love fell short of the ethical possibilities of life, it was due to the fact that, in Gautama's time, life's higher possibilities were as yet unexploited. His increasing preachments against the dangers of lust mean that the field of desire was pathetically restricted in his day to little more than the pleasures of sense. The only way of escape for an ethical soul from the paucity of wholesome objective interests was by taking refuge in the subjective world of self-discipline. Perfection of one's own inner life through insight, self-control, and spiritual freedom became, thus, the alpha and the omega of the good life. But, just as the fragrance of a flower perfumes a whole garden, so the serene spirit of a good man cannot fail to enrich others far and near.

In this appreciation it must be remembered we are in the presence of primitive conceptions of life and the world, and that the Indian mind was then, as it has continued to be, dominated by individualistic and subjective tendencies. With Gautama, as with his people, there was no conception of a common good for all. Nothing could have been farther from his thought than to establish order and social justice in the world. Nor had he the slightest interest in the world of nature or for the work of science. Even the basic social institutions, the family and the community, found no shelter under the reaches of his ethical ideal. Filial duty and the care of wife and child were to be shunned as base hindrances to the good life.

Every philosophy must be understood in the light of the author's obvious intentions, though it must be judged in the light of the implications which inevitably follow from it. Gautama clearly intended his philosophy should take cognizance of only those problems of life whose solution involved nothing beyond the limits of the individual's conscious experience. His philosophy is a proposed way of substituting the joys of the enlightened spirit for the sorrows and miseries of a quenchless thirst, and this is to be accomplished by a method of thought-control. It is an elaborate system of mental therapeutics with far-reaching ethical consequences. Very consciously and deliberately he turned his back upon every question which led beyond the realm of experience into the forbidden field of metaphysics. Consequently the life-philosophy of Gautama must be interpreted as a phenomenology of the way of salvation. And he never seemed to realize that his program could never be kept within these limits, even when his followers brought the matter to his attention. He certainly did not realize that the Dharma which he discovered could possess the finality he attributed to it only on the condition that it was grounded on an enduring world-order, and that his philosophy was his interpretation of that order in its bearing on human life.

At the moment when the Western world is beginning to realize that, with all our getting, we have failed to get wisdom; that in spite of the dazzling victories in our conquest of the world without, the inner life has been left empty and poor, Gautama's philosophy may serve to indicate at least one cause of our spiritual decay: the spring of refreshing and of revaluation of the values of life is running low. But did Gautama's way to enlightenment point the right direction? Are the natural impulses of life for expansion and growth to be met by negation as their final answer?

CHAPTER THREE

THE WISDOM OF CONFUCIUS

With a mirror of brass you can adjust your hat, but with antiquity for a mirror you can predict the rise and fall of empires.
CONFUCIUS

TOWARD the close of the sixth century B.C. China was given her choice between the offerings of two radically different thinkers, a choice which was destined to determine her people's history and culture down to the present day. Lao-tsze, the mystic and the real philosopher of the two, maturing his views throughout a long life spent in meditation, exalted spiritual culture of the individual soul through humility and self-effacement. He taught the vanity of earthly existence, that the *summum bonum* of life was to be found in spiritual union with Tao, the eternal reality that gives law to man and nature alike, and that invests even God himself with the power and attributes of divinity.

According to this view, the wisdom of life lies in obedience to the law of unselfishness, which is, indeed, a cosmic law. 'Heaven endures and the earth continues to be. They do not aim at permanence. Therefore they endure.' Every operation in nature enforces the same lesson. 'The supreme virtue of humility is like water. It refreshes all as it flows, and yet, by unobtrusively seeking the lower levels it draws all lesser streams into itself.' And so it is with the man who has found the wisdom of Tao: 'He puts his own person last, and yet he finds himself in the place of honor.'

Lao-tsze had but one answer to the troubled questions of his day. The true way of life is the way of dignity and strength, but it is the strength of peace and quiet, and the dignity of humility. But the mystic quality was alien to the soul of China. And so Taoism lost the spiritual emphasis of the founder with the passing of the years, and degenerated into a cult of magic.

If we are to accept the Shoo King as offering, at least, the beginnings of an historical account of the ancient Chinese people, the Golden Age of the Celestial Empire was in full flower during the illustrious reigns of the emperors Taou and Shun in the twenty-fourth century B.C. To Confucius, the reputed editor of the book, who used it as authority for his doctrine of morals and government, is due the place of esteem it has held in the life and culture of the Chinese. According to the record — and the tradition is well worth noting — the many states of the Middle Kingdom had been harmonized and united into a coherent empire, and to ensure a more efficient rule, the whole had been divided into twelve provinces and set under twelve governors responsible to the emperor. Six departments of government were created: the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Forests, the Department of Public Works, the Department of Justice, the Department of Music, and the Department of Public Worship. And over each of these a minister was placed, also responsible to the emperor. Under these auspices literature, art, and science were promoted. Astronomers were employed to measure the sidereal year, and revise the calendar. And during the beneficent reign of these two emperors, it is reported, there was peace throughout the land, and the people flourished. Here was material for a philosophy of life of an eminently practical sort.

To Confucius, the record revealed these earthly blessings as flowing naturally and inevitably from the character and virtues of the rulers. He cites with reverence the ' high mindedness, the stern dignity and the straightforwardness of antiquity,' and always as one discovering the secret of political and economic welfare. He writes of Taou that ' he was kind and benevolent as Heaven, and as wise and discerning.' And of Shun — ' he was attentive to duty, respectful, humble and devoted, being noted for his patience, his loyalty and goodness of heart.'

Perhaps the quality of antiquity is best evidenced in the code of morals the emperor Shun is reported to have had his minister set down for the guidance and admonition of the people.

Be genial and affable — with dignity.
Be gentle — with firmness.
Be frank — with respectfulness.
Be practical and businesslike — with reverence.
Be teachable — with readiness to maintain your own convictions.
Be persistent — with consideration for others.
Be forgiving — with discrimination.
Be energetic and ambitious — with sincerity.
Be valorous — with fair play.

What is the explanation of such outbursts of creative genius? And how may people regain the plane of high-mindedness, once it is lost? By the authority and power of high example, is the answer of Confucius. By the subtle working of conscious and unconscious imitation. ' If the one in authority loves propriety and practices it, the people will not dare to be irreverent. If he loves righteousness, the people will not dare not to submit to his example. If he always acts in good faith, the people will inevitably tend to become sincere.'

'All men are good at birth, but not many remain so at the end,' was the belief of Confucius, who quotes with approval one of the ancient Odes:

> But men at first from Heaven their being drew,
> With nature liable to change.
> All hearts in infancy are good and true
> But time and things those hearts derange.

And the saying may be taken as the cornerstone of his philosophy of life. Human nature is sound and good at the start, and always remains so at the core. All man needs in order to reach life's appointed goal is the proper admonition and nurture. And it is the proper business of wise men, under the guidance of Heaven (T'ien) to devise the necessary technique of habit and character-formation, and life will reach its proper destination by its own motivation. But the inspired teacher and guide is the indispensable condition of the good life, for as Shun had said: 'The mind of man is restless, and prone to wander.' Mencius, the greatest of the Confucianists, gave this thesis its classical formulation: 'The tendency of man's nature is like the tendency of water to flow down hill. There are none but have this tendency to good. Men at their birth are naturally good. It is by their habits they become different.' 'The great God (T'ien) has conferred even on inferior peoples a moral sense, compliance with which would show their nature inevitably right.'

There are some minds that seek in philosophy the justification of their loyalties and the ground for their hopes. These are the rationalists among us, the breakers of new paths for thought and action, and their influence on their age is disproportionate to their number. It is an altogether different type of mind that seeks the solution of its problems in history and tradition. The strength — and the weakness — of this type of mind lies in its respect for precedent, in its clinging to prescription and reverence for antiquity. Confucius fully realized he was the child of his age, and recognized the limitations of his mental type by disclaiming originality for his thought, and by appealing to the authority of the past in support of his doctrine. But if Confucius was, as he claimed, only a transmitter, it was merely the spirit and quality of high-mindedness that he transmitted, along with the basic conceptions of human nature, and the physical world. The substance and form of his humanistic doctrine were his own contribution.

But there was a higher authority back of the wisdom of the ancients, which Chinese sages had recognized at a very early period. This was the authority of T'ien, or God, whose nature, or Tao, is truth and righteousness for man, and order and law for the physical universe. The stars in their courses as well as the orderly sequence in the growing things about us, and the winds and waves that seem to come and go by chance, are but the silent, all-pervasive manifestations of the Tao of T'ien. 'Does T'ien speak? The four seasons pursue their courses, and all things are produced: but does T'ien say anything?' And even more pertinent for the philosophy of Confucius, this same Tao of T'ien is the way of life for man, the *summum bonum* of his moral nature. From the beginning it was by virtue of Tao that the heroes of antiquity succeeded in their undertakings and won the reverence of posterity. 'It is only T'ien who is really great: Tao took him for his model.' And he is the source of all goodness and blessing, and the dispenser of rewards and punishments. 'It is T'ien's Tao to give felicity to the good and to bring misfortune upon the bad.' And it is a part of the record that this celestial being took a controlling interest in human affairs, giving aid and guidance to rulers in the difficult tasks of government. 'T'ien, to help inferior people, made for them rulers, and made for these rulers instructors, who should be assistants to T'ien, and helpers in securing tranquillity throughout the realm.' Divinely appointed instructors who should be spokesmen for God! This brings us back to Confucius, and to his mission. He would be authorized spokesman for God, and interpreter of his Tao — the eternal Way of life. 'If my doctrines are to prevail, it is so ordered of God (T'ien); if they are to fail, it is because God so orders it.'

According to the eminent Confucian scholar, Dr. Legge, the best account of the Confucian philosophy of life is given in the third book of the Confucian Canon, which was committed to writing by the grandson of Confucius under the title of the 'Doctrine of the Mean.' And the excellence of this exposition lies in the manner in which the thought of Confucius is exhibited as flowing out from one central principle. That principle holds that duty to one's self, duty to the social order, and duty to God are one and the same, being three modes of obedience to the universal world-order.

The nature and organization of human society finds response in the moral nature of the individual as a divine sanction. 'The life of the moral man is an exemplification of the universal moral order (Tao), because he unceasingly cultivates his true self or moral being.' Consequently, the proper observance of one's social duties conserves self-respect and strengthens moral character, and is the one true way to show reverence for God. These duties grow out of the natural human relations, imposed by the organization of society, and are five in number. These are:

Duties between father and son.
Duties between elder brother and younger.
Duties between husband and wife.
Duties between friends.
Duties between ruler and subject.

Confucius conceived the possibility of being so happily constituted as to apprehend truth intuitively without effort. Such a one would be a ' Sage ' or ' Saint,' hitting his mark without taking aim, and understanding without taking thought. But Confucius, himself, made no claim to moral genius. All he ever claimed for himself was a talent for learning and a stedfastness to know the way; but he was seventy years old before he could say he could follow his heart's desire, without transgression. Confucius could instance only one case of moral genius in his people's history, and he was careful not to commit himself fully even in this case. He said, ' The emperor Shun might perhaps be considered in the highest sense of the word a pious man. In moral qualities he was a saint.'

These duties to society Confucius conceived as so organically bound up in the whole structure of the moral law, that an offence in one would be an offence in all, and the consequences of one's deeds would follow by a species of mental determinism. But as the rewards of virtue would be equally certain, and would follow by the same law, the sure path of success and tranquillity would be clearly marked. Thus, it was pointed out by K'ung Chi, the grandson of Confucius, if those in authority have not the confidence of those under them, successful government of the people is not possible. And there is only one way to gain the respect and confidence of one's friends, and that is by commanding the obedience of one's family. And there is only one way to command the obedience of one's family, and that is by looking into one's own heart, and by being true to oneself. And if one is to be true to oneself, one must know what is good.

The aim of these five social duties is, thus, to strengthen each of the basic human relationships at the point where the strain is greatest, and where a break would have far-reaching moral consequences. A father is enjoined to show affection for the son, and the son to show due reverence and affection for the father. The duty of husband and wife is to make the proper and necessary adjustments each to the other, so that there will be a marital peace and harmony. The elder brother is to show himself well disposed and kind to the younger brother, and the younger brother should give due respect and precedence to the elder brother. Between friends there should be the spirit of willingness to yield precedence, and of joy in showing honor and courtesy. And there should be kindness and benignity on the part of the sovereign and of loyalty on the part of the subject. And as it is possible for an individual to find himself in each of these five social relationships he would soon discover himself enmeshed in a network of prescriptions, and met at every turn in life by a well-marked path.

Propriety, then, is the keyword in human relationships, and indicates the outlet by which man satisfies his social conscience, in the opinion of Confucius. For propriety is a term that covers every personal act, from willing acknowledgment of the universal world-order to the observance of the minutiæ of social etiquette. And if nature has restricted the privilege of sainthood to a favored few, at most, it has opened wide the door to the achieving of the status of the superior man. To show to his contemporaries the way to attain this status, and to reform the social life of his native land, was the life-task Confucius set for himself.

The superior man, he says, will be governed by nine weighty considerations:

In perception, to perceive clearly;
In hearing, to hear distinctly;

That is to say, the intellectual life roots in the soil of sense-experience, and grows only by discriminating the material thus given. Blurred perceptions are unusable material for a discriminating intelligence.

In bearing, to be benign;

In this third rule, Confucius reaches the spiritual level of self-respecting action. Consciousness of personal moral worth should be the motivating principle in one's dealings with others. To be benign is to respect others as one respects himself. Confucius draws no contrast more sharply than he does between the fruits of self-respect and those of meanness. This third rule is more fully amplified in the one following:

In demeanor, to be respectful;

This means he is to be sympathetically considerate. He is to put himself in the other's place, and see his interests from the other's point of view.

In speech, to be sincere;

This is the law of Tao as it concerns human intercourse. Insincerity, broken faith, unkept promises are insults to God (T'ien) and to men alike.

In business to be scrupulously attentive;
When in doubt, to seek the assurance of knowledge;
When angry, to consider the consequences;
In making a profit, to be scrupulously fair.

In the whole range of ethical literature, it is doubtful if another moral code could be found which showed a more subtle blend of high idealism and shrewd common sense. But Confucius could not develop the rest of his system on this high plane. He was, after all, the child of his race and of his own time. For centuries, the social life of the Chinese people had become enmeshed in a cumbersome system of ceremonial etiquette, as detailed in the ceremonial writings, and Confucius was not destined to escape from the meshes. Indeed there is no evidence that he ever tried to escape, or to mitigate its effect on Chinese mentality. The saying that ' Confucius is China ' was just as true twenty-five centuries ago as it is today.

This seems to be the substance of the Confucian philosophy of life. In spite of its metaphysical presuppositions, it turns out to be a mere humanism of pronounced limitations at the end. Reverence for the past strangled every impulse for a richer and fuller present. The judgment of history amply proves that no past is big enough and rich enough for the expanding needs of human life.

And what Confucius was able to get out of the past was not enough to secure and enrich the present, or to create a better future.

The theistic background of Chinese antiquity availed little to the moral elevation of the Chinese ethos, for there grew up at an early date a belief in good and evil spirits, which became a potent factor in the life of the people, and which found an echo in the thought and practice of Confucius himself. ‘How abundantly do spiritual beings make their presence manifest among us! We look for them, but we do not see them; we listen for them but we do not hear them.’ ‘The advent of spiritual beings cannot be known beforehand; all the less should they be slighted.’ ‘To cultivate earnestly our duty towards our neighbor, and to reverence spiritual beings, while maintaining always a due reserve, may be called wisdom.’ In these last words Confucius gives us the pith of his life-view. Summed up, his philosophy amounts to this: Follow the rules of the regimented life as fulfilling the full duty to God and man, but keep an eye on the movements of evil spirits and be ready to placate them when necessary. He accepted the traditional belief in the existence of good and evil spirits, and divided the evil spirits, or demons, into three classes, living respectively in the water, in the soil, and in the mountains. These cause failure in crops, floods, hunger and famine, disease and death, and bring the projects of men to naught. Under the influence of this belief, Confucius could recognize in worship nothing more than a method of defending one's interests against the intervention of unfriendly demons.

There is no suggestion in the recorded sayings of Confucius that he felt that man's reach must exceed his grasp, or that Heaven called one to more than the fulfillment of the moral code. The universe set no problems to Confucius. He had no speculative questions to ask of life. Life and the universe are good, and we need only to know how to use them to our advantage. Lao-tsze, with his handful of followers, sat apart, knowing the way he pointed out was for the few who were devoted to the silent cultivation of a mystical union with God. To him, life opened out upon infinity. Confucius went into the market-place, teaching that life is a closed circle, and everything enclosed can be measured and reduced to rule, and that the secret of prosperity and happiness lies in the practice of conformity. And the mind of Confucius became the soul of China.

What was the contribution of these oriental thinkers to the sum of man's understanding of life's meaning and place in the universal scheme of things? To Confucius, life had its own meaning and value, but only to the extent to which it conformed to the traditions and customs of the past. To him, life was essentially an achievement in conservation, requiring no vision, no outlook into the future, no creative enterprise. To Gautama, neither past nor future signified. In his view, life held no meaning in the nature of things. It was something which, once given, was to be accepted on terms which involved no social obligation, and the minimum of pain and sorrow. Neither the conclusions of Confucius nor those of Gautama made room for progress, for history, or for the expansion of knowledge and culture. There was no azure in their sky, no joy in life, no vision. Neither of them dreamed of the possibility of following the advice of Plato of 'gladly receiving beautiful objects into the soul, feeding upon them, and thereby growing noble and good.' And yet each, in his own way, bore witness of man's great need of organizing his life about some center which will bring inner coherence and pattern, and rescue it from the mere drift and play of momentary impulse. And this is a lesson that the great mass of mankind of the Western world, as well as those of the Orient, have yet to learn.

CHAPTER FOUR

GREECE, THE CRADLE OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION — SOCRATES

The human form and the human mind attained to a perfection in Greece which has impressed its image on those faultless productions whose very fragments are the despair of modern art, and has projected impulses that cannot cease through channels of manifest or imperceptible operation, to ennoble and delight mankind until the extinction of the race.

Greece and her foundations are
Built below the tide of war,
Based on the crystalline sea
Of thought and its eternity;
Her citizens, imperial spirits,
Rule the present from the past;
On all this world of men inherits
Their seal is set.
SHELLEY

A life without reflection on its meaning is unworthy of a man.
SOCRATES

PASSING from the China of Confucius, and from the India of Gautama, to the life of the Greek of the city-state of the fifth century, means a sudden transition from the ignorance and sluggishness of tribal life into the restless energy of a race already possessing its own national culture which was destined to become the foundation of Western civilization. However it may be explained — if it ever is fully explained — the Greek, out from his own resources, was giving to the world those immortal creations which have enriched mankind, at a time when the rest of the world had nothing to offer.

The mind of ancient Athens, in the fifth and the fourth centuries, with its amazing natural gifts, is revealed to us as the mind of the human race, bringing to light in its own experience the universal factors of human thought and aspiration. All through the sixth century, when philosophy was flourishing in the eastern and western cities, Athens had little political or cultural importance. But the spiritual awakening which followed the victories over Darius at Marathon (490 B.C.) and over Xerxes at Salamis (480 B.C.), fostered under the sympathetic leadership of Pericles, brought Athens in one generation to the pinnacle of her greatness. Socrates was then, at the middle of the century, in his twentieth year. Within the narrow limits of the walled city, round which it is stated one could walk in forty-seven minutes, he could meet and hold converse in the freedom of Athenian democracy, with Pericles, the greatest statesman of antiquity, Phidias, the master sculptor of all time, Herodotus and Thucydides, the world's first historians, Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, the greatest tragic dramatists of the classical world, Aristophanes, the father of comic drama, Anaxagoras and Protagoras, the forerunners of the School of Athenian philosophy, and occasional visiting teachers such as Zeno and Eleatic, and Gorgias the gifted sophist. In this environment Socrates spent the seventy years of his life. What would not Shakespeare and Goethe, Michael Angelo and Leonardo have given for the privilege of one day within those walls! When Socrates was fourteen years old Æschylus died. Herodotus and Gorgias were not permanent residents of Athens, but with all the others Socrates mingled and had intimate part in the life of the city. In his boyhood he heard the old men tell of their exploits at Marathon and at Salamis. He saw the marble Parthenon rise on the Acropolis. He saw Phidias at work on his ivory and gold statue of Athena, whose uplifted spear was the landmark for mariners far out at sea. He formed his opinion about democracy by what he saw and heard in the Agora where he did his part as citizen. He saw the building of the huge Dionysian Amphitheatre on the southeastern slope of the Acropolis, and found his place there, with the other thirty thousand when the great tragedies of Agamemnon and Prometheus, Antigone and Œdipus, Electra, Medea, and Iphigenia unfolded the poet's interpretations of the meaning and purpose that underlie human life and destiny. They must have been powerful incentives to reflection on the human problem in a growing mind bent on finding the purpose of things. The Socrates revealed to us by Plato and Xenophon is the old man whose work is finished and who is willing to die in good conscience rather than disobey the laws of his city. It is left to imagination to conceive how he came to such devotion and what sustained him in the seeming failure of his life. Duty is a word for which the Greek language had no equivalent, yet right reason had for Socrates an authority with which no man dared trifle, and law was the expression of his city's honor and integrity, to be obeyed even when it blundered. Only one thing seemed to be rooted deeper in the soul of Socrates — the conviction that back of all, and over all, is a principle of order and righteousness whose voice in conscience is man's highest law. If one may imagine where the record is silent, the words of Æschylus Socrates heard for the first time in his boyhood did not fall in vain on his ears:

While Time shall be, while Zeus in heaven is lord,
His law is fixed and stern;
The wage of wrong is woe.

But his joy in his city and its glory was short-lived. Pericles died in 429, in the third year of the disastrous Peloponnesian War, and the hardships that followed successive defeats, led to political blunders and confusion at home, and the power and prestige of Athens rapidly fell way. Socrates, already active in his philosophical discussions, took his place as hoplite in three campaigns, in two of which he is especially mentioned with credit. In the two instances that are mentioned of his conduct in civic matters, his upright bearing was worthy of special mention. In his trial before the judges he tells of the incidents himself: ' The only office of state which I ever held, O men of Athens, was that of senator; the tribe of Antiochus, which is my tribe, had the presidency at the trial of the generals who had not taken up the bodies of the slain after the battle of Arginusae; and you proposed to try them in a body, contrary to the law, as you all thought afterwards; but at the time I was the only one of the Prytanes who was opposed to the illegality, and I gave my vote against you [he really refused to put the matter to a vote]; and when the orators threatened to impeach and arrest me, and you called and shouted, I made up my mind I would run the risk, having law and justice with me, rather than take part in your injustice because I feared imprisonment and death. This happened in the days of the democracy. But when the oligarchy of the Thirty was in power, they sent for me and four others into the rotunda, and bade us bring Leon the Salaminian from Salamis, as they wanted to put him to death. This was a specimen of the sort of commands they were always giving with the view of implicating as many as possible in their crimes; and then I showed, not in word only but in deed, that, if I may be allowed to use such an expression, I cared not a straw for death, and that my great and only care was lest I should do an unrighteous or unholy thing. For the strong arm of that oppressive power did not frighten me into doing wrong; and when we came out of the rotunda, the other four went to Salamis and fetched Leon, but I went quietly home. For which I might have lost my life, had not the power of the Thirty shortly afterward come to an end. And many will witness to my words.'

Philosophy began in the sixth century as speculation concerning the nature of the physical universe in the Ionian cities on the western coast of Asia Minor, and was brought to Athens, and to the attention of Socrates, by Anaxagoras, and according to Plato, by Parmenides and Zeno, who were citizens of Elea in southern Italy. Socrates is reported in the *Phaedo* to have confessed that he had been deeply interested in the cosmological theories in his youth. But that interest gave way before his growing interest in human life and human relations, for in his twenty-eighth year we find him turning away from Anaxagoras because his philosophy ended in barren speculations.

It was not until after the middle of the fifth century that philosophy came to Athens as one of the educational forces of the Greek Enlightenment, in which man and his interests constituted the central problem, but it was not until the fourth century that a coherent interpretation of life in its cosmic setting became the main objective. The simple Olympian faith of the age of

Æschylus had lost much of its vitality by the time Euripides was popularly accepted as interpreter of human destiny, but the special occasion for the crystallization of Socrates' philosophic convictions arose out of the need of the Athenian democracy for clear and discriminating thinking in attempting to meet the troublesome problems of self-government during the terrible years of the Peloponnesian War, and because of the failure of the Sophist teachers to locate the source of the people's trouble. For the regeneration of the city it should have been necessary that the people should know what virtue in a citizen meant, what justice was, what courage and efficiency were. It was vitally important that they learn how to pick out the ' common-to-all ' from the ' particular-to-me,' and govern their actions accordingly in the interest of the public good. Protagoras took the ground that there was no ' common-to-all ' in human experience; that all that can be reached by thought proves to be ' particular ' experiences, and that each man is warranted in doing what seems good in his own eyes. He reinforced his theses by appealing to the psychology being taught by Democritus of Abdera, the greatest of the Cosmologists, whose genetic explanation of the mental life involved sensations only. If this explanation held, all experience, including the higher processes of thought, had no validity beyond the scope of the individual's personal interest, and all values were reducible to the algedonic terms of pleasure and pain. Protagoras was right in holding we must seek the criterion of values in the world within rather than in the world without, but in the application of his thesis he reduced the distinction of true and untrue, right and wrong to terms of expedience merely. To Socrates, this meant giving up all hope for philosophy and science, and, in practical affairs, played into the hands of the demagogue and the corruptionist. And Socrates raised his standard against the thesis.

In his metaphysics Aristotle attributes to Socrates the discovery of inductive discourse and the definition of the concept, and the Socratic dialogues make it clear that by inductive discourse Aristotle had in mind the maieutic method by which Socrates brought to light the logical universal involved in human relations. It was a thesis diametrically opposed to that of Protagoras. It implied that logical thought moves on the plane of concepts, and that even when we think about sense objects, what we think is given in universal terms. The logical universal or concept, and the meaning of implication for reflective thought received systematic consideration for the first time at the hands of Aristotle. But from the time of Socrates, the intellectual life of the Western world, its sciences and its philosophies, as well as its practical enterprises, have rested on the integrity of the concept as the irreducible unit of reflective thought, and on logical consistence as the negative criterion of truth. In this achievement of Socrates, the genius of the Hellenic mind came to full reflective consciousness, and the foundation was laid for the culture of the Western world.

Socrates had no taste for mere speculation, and in his mature years he had no problems merely scientific in nature. Such matters, he held, have no real bearing on human interests. He made specific reference to this at his trial. All he ever got from Anaxagoras was the suggestion that mind or reason was back of all things as the ground of the cosmic order, a suggestion whose far-reaching implications Anaxagoras failed to appreciate, but which became for Socrates the basic postulate of his ethical conception of life.

Probably no man of great endowments ever lived who was more discerning in his choice of means for doing a lasting service to mankind than Socrates. The seeming insignificance of his labors bore no relation to the unmeasured reaches of their final outcome. Recognizing the metaphysical implications of his thinking, he nevertheless formulated no metaphysical theory. It is commonly known that the philosophy of life in Western thought took its impulse from him, and yet his own philosophy of life is for us largely a matter of inference. Nor did he have a developed ethical theory, although his concept of the *summum bonum* set the central problem of ethics for all time, and his dialectic generally concerned ethical problems. Concerning God and immortality, he maintained, theoretically, a receptive attitude to the end, offering no positive opinion about either, and yet his life steadies the faltering in faith and conduct even to this day. Gilbert Murray is authority for saying that the real religion of the fifth century at Athens was a devotion to the city itself. In this sense, Socrates was deeply religious, but only, or chiefly, in the city he had known in its Golden Age, and in the immortal creations of genius inspired by devotion to the city, he caught flashes of the universal which revealed to him the Unseen Ground of all order, which was the ultimate object of his devotion.

As a philosopher, Socrates gave all his energies to one problem — the practical problem of awakening the youth of Athens to the life of reflective thought, and to disciplining their minds in the technique of clear and consistent thinking. He was the schoolmaster of Athens, and became, thereby, the schoolmaster of the Western world.

Among the peoples of antiquity the Hellenes were the most versatile, and their culture the most highly developed. But notwithstanding their many-sided genius, their dominant mental characteristic was their predilection for reflective thought. The Greek mind had a natural aptitude for clear, lucid thinking. It loved to understand, and its intellectual curiosity was proverbial. The Greek's mental habit was to analyze a new situation, to discriminate. And since discrimination is the life of thought and gives the desired objectivity, he held of small value those experiences, the emotional and instinctive, which do not lend themselves easily to analysis. Emotional experiences are 'moist' and 'damp' (as was said later), and our wits are readily befogged by them, but the 'dry, white light' of conceptual thought reveals the true nature of things and clarifies every situation. Under the conditions of Athenian life in the fifth century, it was natural for Greece to have produced a Socrates; it was natural for Socrates to have so fully understood and interpreted the dominant characteristic of his people's genius.

The implications of this intellectualistic emphasis were carried out with singular consistency by Socrates in his discussion of the concepts. The 'highest good' for man is knowledge, but it is knowledge which is at the same time a principle of self-control. Consequently virtue is knowledge which eventuates in right action. Virtue with Socrates was not a quality of will, for even Aristotle, who first clearly discriminated the volitional function from the knowing function, did not reach a full conception of will. In Socrates' thought, when we know what is good, the appropriate action of itself follows by inner necessity. Between ' wisdom ' (Sophos) and ' balance of soul ' (Sophrosyne) he drew no distinction, said Xenophon. For in a finely balanced soul, insight merges into right conduct. Right conduct is thus seen to be organically one with rational insight, and the effective method of reform in conduct and character is discovered to be the logical method of purging the concepts of the virtues.

The pruning and the rectification of ideas gives them precision, tests them and makes sure of their implications, and brings them into coherent relations. The instrument of this self-discipline is dialectic. In the hands of Socrates it was, as Benn aptly phrased it, a facile instrument for introducing his own convictions into the minds of others, but so that his interlocutors seemed to be discovering them themselves. In this way life is raised to a higher level by thought, and philosophy becomes a perpetual carrying of life into ideas, and of ideas into life.

The Socrates that has come down to us stands at the close of the fifth century B.C. and at the beginning of the fourth. He closed the period of glorious outpouring of creative activity at Athens, and prepared the way for the critical period of conceptual analysis and philosophical systems. In the memory of men then living, Athens had passed from a city of no consequence, to be the ' beacon tower of the world ' and then lost its place of power and its men of imagination. Only Demosthenes and Praxiteles in the fourth century remind us of the men of the Age of Pericles. The task of the fourth century was to inquire into the causes of true greatness, whether of individuals or of nations, to trace the implications of human affairs and seek to establish human life on broad and secure foundations. The fourth century was the century in which Athens gave to the world the great systems of philosophy and the organization of the sciences. The dignity of man and the imperishable grandeur of his works of imagination, which were implied in the art of the fifth century, were given conceptual form and interpretation in the analytical thought of the fourth. It was Socrates who set the goal and formulated the method.

Intellectualism, which was the most pervasive influence of the Hellenic mind on Western civilization, is not a philosophy, and therefore it throws no light on the problem of life. It is an attitude of mind which exalts conceptual thought as the normative factor of intelligence and as the measure of truth and reality. As a method, its contribution to progress has been beyond calculation. It has cleared the ground of superstition and ignorance, and opened the way of expanding knowledge in every field, the amazing structures of science being its chiefest contribution. But the influence of the intellectualistic emphasis has not been wholly on the side of progress, notably in matters where human values have been involved which required a balanced judgment. By ignoring the function of the non-intellectual factors in intelligence, it has not infrequently brought confusion into the problem of validity, becoming responsible thereby for the barren rationalisms and the absurd orthodoxies which have burdened the history of thought and warped the lives of men.

But Socrates is not chargeable with such misplaced emphasis. His mission as a thinker was to make clear the nature and function of the concept in the intellectual life, but his dialectical labors were projected on a rich background of spiritual implication which shone through and colored all his teaching. There were affirmations in his thought that were never expressed. His whole procedure as a thinker moves on the tacit assumption of a moral and spiritual nature in man, something divine and self-revealing which gives life all its dignity and worth. The laws of life, therefore, are not imposed from without, but are implicated in the nature of the human organism. Here begins in philosophy the emphasis on the freedom of the inner life, which was the dream of all great thinkers in the centuries that followed down to modern times, and was destined to play the leading role in the philosophy of Hegel. It is one of the paradoxes of history that those who have suffered the charge of atheism have frequently given the world in their lives the best proof of their invincible faith in a Supreme Intelligence — Bruno, Spinoza, and Fichte, among the many. So it was with Socrates. Condemned to drink the hemlock as atheist and destroyer of the faith of youth, and even six years after his death still believed to have been a public enemy when Xenophon, his friend, sought to clear his name, Socrates, in his life, in his defence before the judges, down to his last words in prison before his death, has stood for centuries before the world as the first and greatest of the philosophers who have found that the only convincing way of confessing God before men is to be true to one's conscience. And he will stand for all time as the teacher of men, and as one who, in the midst of calumny and defeat, is sustained by a faith that the truth will survive, and that 'no evil can befall a good man, either in life or after death.' 'For he and his are under the Providence of God.'

CHAPTER FIVE

THE PERMANENT AND THE CHANGING IN LIFE — PLATO

The One remains, the Many change and pass;
Heaven's light forever shines, earth's shadows fly;
Life like a dome of many-colored glass
Stains the white radiance of eternity.

SHELLEY

Seeing all these things, what ought not we to do that we may obtain virtue and wisdom in life? Fair is the prize, and the hope great!

PLATO

THERE is a rare type of mind whose greatness lies in the capacity to uncover new and significant problems, and perfect methods of dealing with them. Its genius does not lie in system-building, but in breaking new paths and opening new doors to human inquiry. The world's debt to Socrates was of this sort. He discovered the importance of the concept and the inductive method of determining exactly its meaning. He was the first to point out the fact that the whole intellectual structure of the human mind rests on unprovable practical assumptions, and he set for all time the task of determining man's *summum bonum* as the central problem of life.

Beyond this service he apparently did not care to go. He was content to be the gadfly of Athens, the unofficial consultant of all who cared to bring their problems to him. Of all those who claimed him as spiritual father, the one who owed him most and was his best exponent was Plato. Socrates was content to plant his seed knowing there would not be any lack of those following who would develop their implications. Plato was a systematic thinker (although he left no system), and what he produced was the world's first idealistic interpretation of life and the world.

From the Greek point of view, there was something unique and unpredictable in the mentality of Plato. He was, indeed, genuinely Greek — Attic Greek — in his intellectualistic bias, and, consequently, throughout his system the virtues are always conceived as forms of knowledge, and the way of conceptual thinking as the normal way to truth. Because of his own mental predisposition, reinforced by his eight years spent with Socrates, it was inevitable that he should succeed to his master's labors in dialectic. But Plato was not wholly intellectualist. There was in him a strain of the poet and artist. He was reflectively aware of the element of value in human experience, and was aware, vaguely, no doubt, that the experience of value is always given in terms of feeling. The importance of this problem of value in his young manhood was forced upon his attention in a practical way by the sordid and corrupt state of public morals in Athens following the disaster of the Peloponnesian War. It is a significant fact in the history of European thought that Plato first made the problem of value a problem of philosophy. Furthermore, he was 'least Greek of all the Greeks' in the strain of mysticism which tended at times to blur the sharp lines which separate in his thinking the things which are seen from the things which are not seen, a tendency which was to have important repercussions in philosophy and theology down to our own day.

'As a young man,' Plato tells us in one of his letters, 'I went through the same experience as many other. I thought that, at the very moment that I became my own master, I should devote myself to public affairs.' He then goes on to tell how, by the hazard of politics (his kinsman Critias being at the time the ruling spirit of the Thirty), an opportunity came to him to enter public life. But before he committed himself, he discovered the hopelessness of the political situation under the constitution, and the criminal neglect and stupidity of the leaders, and in disgust he turned aside from public life. 'Then,' he continues in his letter, 'I did not cease to investigate all possible means of improving the situation, and indeed of reforming the whole constitution. But in the end I came to the conclusion that "all the cities of the present age are badly governed."' This political interest was kept alive during the eight years he spent with Socrates, and during the twelve years he spent abroad following the master's death. If we accept the tradition that has come down to us from Hermodorus, one of Plato's disciples, part of these twelve years was spent with the Eleatic philosopher, Eucleides, at his home in Megara. At the end of this period of sojourn abroad, and shortly before he visited the Pythagoreans in the Greek cities in Sicily and southern Italy, he sums up the results of his political reflections in his letter in these significant words: 'I was forced to conclude that it is from the true philosophy alone that we can come to recognize what is right both in public and private affairs.' In these words we have the clue to his life and to his philosophical interpretations. It is a reasonable inference that the intellectual ferment of his mind concerning this 'true philosophy' led Plato to visit Archytas and the other thinkers in these western cities. The Pythagorean Brotherhood in its early history had been a practical training-school for morals and good-citizenship. The dominant thought of the order was that the State embodies the highest good for man, and therefore there are ethical grounds why the individual should subordinate his personal interests to the larger interests of the community, which the State requires. But while the ethical spirit of this earlier emphasis pervaded the Pythagorean group at the time of Plato's visit, mathematical and metaphysical problems now held their chief interest. In their study of music they had discovered that harmony was based on the simple numerical relation of the length of the strings, and their study of astronomy had led them to conclude that the maker of heavens and earth knew geometry, too. This was the entering wedge of idealism into metaphysics, for order, relation, and pattern are mental predicates, and mean nothing apart from mind. Wherever our minds seek to trace order and relation in the phenomena of nature, we virtually imply the correspondence of the categories and principles of the material universe with the categories and principles of the knowing mind. But Plato's mind was influenced from still another quarter.

One hundred years earlier, in the Greek city of Miletus on the western coast of Asia Minor, two philosophers, Heraclitus and Parmenides, raised the issue: whether change or identity is the ultimate fact of the physical universe. To the practical mind it was, no doubt, an absurd and futile question to raise, but the issue involved consequences which these early cosmologists could not afford to ignore, and when in the fifth century philosophy came to Athens, the problem of change and identity came with it. In brief, the problem was something like this: how can a thing remain the same thing when it is undergoing change all the time? Or, how can a thing which is obviously in ceaseless process of change be one and the selfsame thing? It is the same river which one crosses day by day, and yet the water is never the same. The tree which shows no change from day to day was but a sapling a few years ago. Everywhere are minute changes which overpass our power of perception. But what is deeply significant, these two, change and identity, not only come together in the same thing, but practical interests require that they shall come together. If the planted seed did not undergo change there would be no harvest, and had there been only change the outcome would have been something else and not grain. Facts such as these presented to these thinkers a real problem, for as yet the concept of development had not yet arrived.

The importance of this problem for Plato's thought is measured by its bearing on human affairs. Most of the enduring interests of mankind are bound up with our social inheritance, and this inheritance is the achievement of no one individual and no one age. Of all our prized possessions the ideas and the ideals, the arts and the social institutions are the most unstable and precarious. Constant vigilance and a willingness to recreate these social assets from generation to generation alone preserve them from falling away and disappearing out of our lives. And yet, while our endeavor is to preserve this social inheritance as the very foundation of our civilization, our interest is not in a permanence inconsistent with change, but rather in a permanence realized in and enhanced through change. And how such permanence can be achieved, especially in the field of our higher interests, is one of the most serious problems that touches us at every point in life. In the union of change and identity lies the essential condition of progress.

But the concept of progress is a modern achievement. It was no factor in Greek thought and life. Plato undertook to conceive the interpretation of change and identity in human affairs, but realized this concept in static rather than in dynamic terms. He saw in the unison of these two opposites merely the blend in nature and life of dissimilar factors of unequal value. The inner nature of things, their real nature, is permanent. It is the invisible, intangible pattern or form of things, and it abides selfsame throughout all changes. The visible or outer aspects of the things, the describable properties perceived through the senses, are merely phenomenal and subject to changes of all sorts. Everything has thus its inner and its outer aspects, a real and an apparent nature, a permanent and a changing reality. And — a fact most significant for human life — an analogous dualism runs through the field of values. The higher values are the truly real values, and they are enduring. They are the eternal values of the spirit. The lower values, the values of sense experience, are temporal and relative. In this way, by identifying the changeless and abiding in our experience with eternal and ideal values, Plato reaches a new conception of reality, which becomes the heart and soul of his philosophy. From this concept of reality, as from a pinnacle, he envisages human life and the physical universe, and attempts to give the facts of both their proper meaning and value in a conceptual order.

Plato returned to Athens from his sojourn among the Pythagoreans in his fortieth year prepared to enter upon his life-work as head of the Academy which he founded in an olive garden just outside the city wall. It was just twelve years since the death of Socrates, and the ethical spirit of the master and zest for the dialectical task were still strong in him. Whether he spent all the intervening years in observing the social and political institutions and customs of other peoples, and reflecting on ' what is needed by mankind,' the record does not show. How far he ranged in his travels, and with whom he discussed his problems, are matters which tradition leaves in doubt. But it is certain that in these years his speculative and political interests were broadened and deepened, and the foundations of his own thinking firmly laid. In Archytas, especially, philosopher and statesman of Tarentum, Plato found a congenial spirit and a stimulating thinker, with whom he was to have years of close and friendly interchange of opinion. But from first to last it was the moral idealism of Socrates with its spiritual lift that gave driving force to all his thinking. In whatever field of inquiry his logic carried him, it was always the pattern of the good life which he was seeking to trace.

Plato begins his philosophy of life at the point where his mind, rudely awakened by the tyranny and corruption of Athenian politics, felt impelled to seek the causes of social wrong-doing. The people's minds were hopelessly confused in their basic conceptions of right and wrong, and the Sophist teachers of the day only added to the general confusion. Socrates had held that back of the cross-purposes of people's behavior lies unclear thinking. The implications of ideas come out in practice, so that the cure for wrong action is right thinking. But Socrates had been content with definition of single, isolated concepts, believing, as he did, that all ideas and concepts were potential germs of action, and emerged of themselves into conduct. Consequently, he restricted his labors to taking up, one by one, such concepts as justice, courage, temperance, and such like, clarifiying and making consistent these concepts, as if each concept stood complete in itself and independent of any theory of community welfare. He believed no man voluntarily chooses the wrong course of action, his behavior being determined by the dynamic quality of the ideas in his mind. Briefly stated, the intellectual determinism of Socrates meant that a man is free to think but not free to act.

The matter stood somewhat different with Plato. He was convinced that ' it is from the true philosophy alone that we can come to recognize what is right both in public and in private affairs.' He saw clearly that the meaning one gives to justice, courage, and the other social concepts will depend on his social theory and what it required. For these concepts merely reflect the possible attitudes one may take in social relations, as determined by his social philosophy. Socrates was tragically consistent when he argued at length with his friend Crito that justice required him to remain in prison and meet his unjust sentence, as if justice were a virtue in itself. The thought of Plato was that justice could be properly defined only by learning what conduct was most fitting, and best served the ends of the State, which meant the good of all the citizens. And who would say that it was best for Athens, and for the good of her citizens, that Socrates was condemned to drink the hemlock!

What Plato saw, and what was to exert a far-reaching influence on his later thinking, was that total views alone give the whole truth, and that a philosophy of life is the only sure guide of life for the individual. And he also saw that value does not reside in things but in the right use of things — by the way things may be used to advance organic interests of human beings. Plato is very explicit about this. A pruning hook is good when it serves to cut the vine branch. A shepherd is good for the care of the sheep. A ruler is good for insuring the safety and well-being of his subjects. A particular form of government — democracy, oligarchy, or aristocracy — is good in the degree that it subordinates all lesser ends to the happiness and enlightened independence of the people. Thus, concepts of value, one and all, are just so many symbols of particular forms of utility which reflect the purposiveness of life. No amount of logical purging of isolated concepts, however important for clear and consistent thinking, will ever reveal whether any one of them is true, or what must be done to make it true. Plato would never have subscribed to the Cartesian maxim: *quod clare et distincte concipitur, verum est.*

The crux of the life-problem, with Plato, was the problem of values. And value for him was, pre-eminently, moral value — the value which makes for the good life. On his first visit to Sicily, he had met at the court of the reigning tyrant in Syracuse, a young man named Dion, for whom Plato summed up the whole wisdom of life as ' loving goodness more than pleasure and luxury.' But what was ' goodness '? To the Greek mind ' goodness ' meant efficiency, the art of managing affairs generally, the habit of mind which put the possessor in command of a situation and enabled him to do the fitting thing. To Plato it meant some spiritual quality which brought insight and unity into one's experience; something that would lift the life which possessed it out of the confusions of cross-purposes and the stupidities of self-seeking. Search for such ' goodness ' inevitably led beyond the borders of conventional Greek thought into the field of speculative mysticism.

Until Socrates, speculation had approached the understanding of man and his life from without, and was well represented by Protagoras for whom there were no universal principles, whether of thought or knowledge or conduct. Plato's first task was to supply the metaphysical warrant for the Socratic belief that the laws of right thinking, as well as those of right conduct, are organic, and not the accidents of association. Only organic beings have needs, and without needs there can be no values. Back of the values of life are human needs, and back of these is the human organism itself.

Man's life and the life of the brute have little in common except the raw material of sense experience. The animal mind is tethered to the here and the now, but man is the spectator of all times and all places. Creature comforts make up the good life for the animal, but man's needs are boundless. His life is a perpetual search for something which he does not possess, without which he is unhappy. And as the fruits of this endless search have come the arts, the sciences, culture, civilization, and progress. And what makes all these possible is that man has the gift of vision: he sees the whole, where the eye gives only the fragment, and vision makes him citizen of the universe. It is at this point that Plato's theory of knowledge enters.

When a man perceives a tree or a stone he perceives more than comes to the eye, and in that more lies all that makes these objects intelligible. For he perceives them as different, and each one of its kind, and the eye knows nothing of difference and kinds. He perceives the sameness and number and beauty of things about him, but the senses know nothing of sameness or number or beauty. He reads the printed page and hears the spoken word, and in each case he gets the meaning, but meaning is something the senses cannot report. In all these instances, mind as a constitutive function has intervened to make the contribution of the senses intelligible. Perception is a constitutive process investing the object with meaning, and thereby rendering it intelligible. All knowing, all understanding is seeing the particular in its conceptual setting. It is interpretation.

Concerning the nature of knowledge, Plato's answer to Protagoras was the one Socrates had given. Thinking and knowing move in terms of universals, not of particulars, even when that which is thought about or known is particular. And with this bit of insight Plato is now ready to give his solution of the problem that divided Heraclitus and Parmenides. The universal in experience, which is that which makes experience intelligible, is the permanent and changeless. The particular in experience, which as particular is meaningless, is changing and precarious. These two elements, the particular or material, and the universal or formal, unite in constituting every thing which is part of the intelligible world. While the material element gives things their existential character — their locus in the space-time order — it is the universal or formal element which make them amenable to the ideal standards of value, the beautiful, the true, and the good. And the latter are the eternal values of the spiritual nature of man. A beautiful face changes with the years, for there is the beauty of radiant youth, and there is the beauty of well-poised, conscious maturity, but beauty is one and unchangeable. It has a fixed meaning. If it had not we could not think it. We could not give it a name.

But reason in man contributes more than this in the genesis of experience. It is the principle of order and system. Its highest law is the law of unity, and it appears in consciousness as unifying function. By virtue of this unifying function, intelligible objects arise in consciousness whose numerous elements are derived from various sources. By virtue of this unifying function a concept or an object becomes more intelligible as it becomes integrated as parts or members into larger wholes or systems of meaning. This is why the construing of things as component parts or members in the wholes to which they belong is what we call understanding them. This inner coherence of all that is intelligible sets the bounds within which man's problems fall, and at the same time furnishes the means for their solution. For to be a problem it must be conceivable as such. All man's problems are thought-problems, to be solved by thought and in terms of thought, and the results of such thought to be validated by thought-standards.

And these standards — what are they, and how may they be determined? The all-sufficient answer is, by the dialectic of thought as it explicates the spontaneous value-judgment given in the life-process itself. That which determines the validity of thought cannot be itself thought. The value-judgment is a unique type of judgment, a judgment of the life-function itself, rather than of the intellect. ' Values cannot be, except as temporary expedients of thought, lifted out of the organic process in which alone they are real.' Thus, the essence of human intelligence is not in the life of sense, but in the life of reason; it is a spiritual principle akin to the objective world-order. The all-comprehensive totality of consistent meanings, which is the ultimate logical ideal, is the *summum bonum* of the intellectual life. But moral values, too, are organic parts within a universal and self-complete order, of which mind or reason is the ultimate source or principle.

Now, Plato recognized all these reasonings had far-reaching metaphysical implications also, by which reason becomes the principle of unity and purpose in the cosmic order. Thus, the rational forms which give texture and pattern to our own thought are ' participated in ' by things, which thereby acquire the meaning and intelligibility they have for our minds. When we perceive things as few or many, like or unlike, beautiful or ugly, we tacitly assume these predicates are applicable to things, in which case the outer world cannot be wholly alien to our minds. The things which exist in the outer space-time order, and which for practical reasons, as well as for theoretical reasons, we must know and use, must have something in their structure and mode of operation akin to the timeless patterns of our minds. Otherwise, we could not know they existed, much less know what to do with them. The realm of nature, then, takes its patterns from the same source and authority as do our minds. And as far out into space as the universe reaches, and to its utmost bounds in time, mind rules and gives law to all things, even to the minutest particle. For the universe knows measure and proportion. It obeys the law of the 'limit' and of 'number,' as the Pythagoreans had phrased it. 'God always geometrises,' is Plato's way of expressing the same thought, according to Plutarch. And in the *Philebus* he is quite specific: 'What they call the universe is not left to the guidance of unreason and chance medley, but on the contrary it is ordered and governed by a marvellous intelligence and wisdom.'

Everything in our world, then, is, according to Plato, a dual affair. It has an outer and an inner aspect, the one reporting to us through the sense, and the other through the reason. The outer aspect, taken merely as given in sensation, means nothing. It is merely the shell of reality. The inner aspect has meaning, and is the medium through which the mind grasps reality. In its report we have knowledge. The wise man will treat the world of phenomena, therefore, as merely a system of symbols, whose value lie wholly in what they symbolize. He will live on the plane of the unseen and the eternal.

But this dualism penetrates to the inner sanctuary of the soul, itself, and hence the tragic sense of life in man. The good life is not only the reward of conflict; it is, for man, realized only in the midst of conflict. For man is caught in between two worlds of unequal value and of unequal force of appeal, and in a functional sense he belongs to both worlds. His true citizenship is above, in the unseen and eternal world of reason, and in his better moments he knows he breathes true freedom only in the 'upper air' of his better nature. But he is caught and held in the meshes of physical existence, and is at the mercy of native and acquired impulses, which are frequently at variance with each other, but ceaselessly at war with his higher nature. Thus, in the midst of life's conflict, man discovers he is not only the battlefield; he is also both contending forces as well. In a well-known passage in the *Phaedo,* Plato sums up his belief about the soul and its destiny in an imaginary conversation between Socrates and his friend Cebes: 'Consider, then, Cebes, from all that has been said, whether the soul is most like to that which is divine, immortal, intelligible, simple, indissoluble and ever the same and identical with itself, while the body is composite, dissoluble and never the same with itself. And did we not say that the soul, whenever it makes use of the body to consider anything, whether of sight or hearing or by any other sense, is drawn by the body toward that which is never the same, and then it wanders, loses its way, is confused, and is seized with giddiness, as though drunk? But when the soul withdraws itself from bodily influences, it passes to that which is pure and eternal, immortal and immutable. And as the soul is akin to this, she cleaves ever to it, when she belongs to herself, and is capable of it.'

Here we have the human situation, as Plato saw it, in the abstract and as a problem for philosophy, with a clear indication of the direction to look for the solution. Briefly, here is the substance of the matter: the human soul partakes of reality and is, therefore, in nature akin to the divine. It is simple and indissoluble, and therefore immortal. And in its eternal existence, 'when the soul departs to that which is like herself,' its experiences have the timelessness and immutability of thought, and all the significance of the eternal values. But in its present earthly existence, caught as it is in the web of flesh and ceaselessly bombarded through the senses by incitements from without and betrayed by instincts and appetites within, the life of the soul is filled with discord and confusion. It wanders and loses its way in its search for truth and reality.

In this view of human life there was no place for pessimism. Earthly life as we find it is not ‘good’ but it may be made ‘good’ by the power of thought. Man may, at least, understand the pitfalls of the human mind, and, by taking thought, escape the misleading and the confusion of impulse and emotion. He may, by favoring the eternal qualities of the soul, live above the enticements of the sense-world in the freedom of faith. He may also, by conceptual thinking, bring his motives before the bar of reason, and check error and wrong at the source. Doubtless there is genuine optimism in all this, but were this the whole story, asceticism would be the ideal and monasticism would be the counsel of wisdom of Plato’s philosophy of life.

But this was not the whole story. Plato’s early experience of political misgovernment and corruption under the Tyranny of the Thirty, at Athens, confirmed by his study of government abroad, had led to the conclusion that the political institutions of his people required a fundamental reorganization on a rational basis. He was convinced that it is from the true philosophy alone that one could hope to discover what was right and what was wrong, whether in private life or in the affairs of state. That true philosophy, at least in foundation and substructure, was now firmly established. What should be the character of the social and political theory that would logically complete the structure?

The well-being of communities and peoples depend on finding some permanent basis for their common hopes and interests. The social virtues — courage, temperance, stedfastness, justice — which are the judgment of life's criticism on life, and which are the voicings of that part of our being that lies too deep to be plumbed by thought, are just so many different expressions of the soul's yearnings for absolute values in social relations. Social right and wrong are not distinctions to be made to serve the temporary convenience of rulers. They do not receive their meaning from human convention, but are what they are in the nature of the universe. For the security and peace of any state, these and other essentials of community-living ought to be embodied in a conception of government, and made authoritative in the political life of the people. With this interest in mind Plato offers in the Republic his conception of the ideal state — the first of the Utopias.

The supreme virtue in the ideal state should be justice, which in the Platonic sense meant the vitalizing and harmonious ordering of one's whole being, to be realized and maintained, as a social and political virtue, by the voluntary self-subordination of the citizens to the common good. The conception implied that each individual in the state should accept his social station and vocation to be determined by his capacity to serve in largest measure the common interests of all. In the individual life the highest good was discovered to be the inner harmony realized by subordinating the lower, sensuous nature to the law of the higher nature. So, the highest good of the state — and of all the citizens as sharers in the life of the state — is realized in and through the spirit of co-operation and good-will of the people. Plato never tires of pointing out the excellencies of this chief virtue. Justice is as necessary in time of peace as in time of war, he says. It is eminently useful in contracts. ' Even in games the just is better than the unjust '; while ' in the purchase of a horse a good judge of horses is the end of judging whether this horse or that one is to be preferred; but when that point is settled, — then the end of fair-dealing calls for justice.' Of course, ' for the proper use of the pruning-hook we need the vine-dresser, but to keep the pruning-hook safe we need justice.'

The common interests of the community are based on few fundamental human needs, and these are represented in occupations of certain recognized classes in society. Food, clothing, and shelter are the first needs in Plato's lists, and these are met by husbandman, weaver, carpenter, smith, and artizan. Then there is need of security, which is the care of the soldier class. Then there is need of education, of statesmanship, and of authority. This is the burden of the ruling class. In these three stations in life, representing the irreducible conditions of group-life, all citizens find their own places provided for them, diversities of gifts and natural inclinations predisposing each to his own kind of vocation. Thus, slaves and serfs belong to the lower or producer's level, who look after the sense-needs of the people. He seems to assume they lack capacity to rise to a higher level. The men of action are the natural guardians of the state, and are predestined to the soldier class. The intellectual type, with his gift for reflective analysis and generalization, make up the higher or ruling class.

The details of the picture, interesting from the point of view of social philosophy, are not in the focus of our present interest. The dominant thought in Plato's mind was, that in accepting the role of self-subordination, the individual was not violating the teleology of his own life, but really fulfilling it. The state is an ethical institution. Its purpose is to carry the ideal of human life to higher reaches than is possible to the individual within the limits of his own life. The individual, by merging his life in the life of the state, is exalted to a higher plane and his inner life is reinforced by the corporate sense of life's meaning and purpose. Here, then, is new cause for happiness. In accepting his station with its duty, whether as philosopher-king, soldier, or laborer, he rightfully feels that the dignity and integrity of the whole rests on his shoulders, and is sustained by his loyalty. Each man becomes the bearer of the ideal of his people.

The picture Plato drew of the ideal state, while revolutionary in its principle and general pattern, was drawn very largely to fit within the limits of Greek habits and customs. It was a glorified Greek city-state he has in mind. The institution of human slavery was accepted as ethically justified and economically sound. It never occurred to Plato to apply the principle of justice to human beings as such. But within the restrictions of the city-state, the proposed changes in the rights of the individual were drastic and revolutionary. The family was to be abolished, marriage was to be regulated by the state, and for ends of the state. Children were to be wards of the state, cared for and educated by the state in the duties of citizenship. Indeed, education should be the state's chief function, for the state alone knew how to develop the qualities of youth, to supply the needed courage and skill in soldiery, and the wisdom for leadership.

The thesis of the Republic was long in formulating itself in the mind of Plato, and suffered changes in the course of its development. As Plato grew older, the hope of realizing such an ideal on earth grew fainter, and more and more the state was conceived as the educational instrument for spiritual emancipation from the bondage to sense, and preparing the individual for the freedom of the realm of eternal truth.

Plato's philosophy was, for the Western world, the first systematic attempt to establish the supremacy of the inner life, and was carried through with consistency to the point of absurdity. The true Platonist lives in a transfigured world, the light of the unseen and the eternal realm mingling with and shining through the fabric of the world of sense. In this ideal world he lives and moves and has his being. And it is, for him, real living, not idle dreaming. Plato had only contempt for the arts of make-believe. The fatal defect of poetry, as he saw it, is its unreality, in its lack of seriousness and outcome. It is, indeed, musical and ingenious, but it is nevertheless frivolous and artificial. What life requires is knowledge, for life is action, and knowledge leads to the action which brings freedom and happiness. Plato had little use for men of science, for science too often seeks to know those matters which have little or no bearing on the values of life, and is exclusively interested in the phenomena of the sense-world.

There is a certain implicit religiousness in the philosophy of Plato, which sprang from the mystical strain in the man, and which ever since has found an echo in

Western culture. There is something in man which makes it impossible for him to accept life as the brute animal seems to do, as a mere succession of more or less agreeable experiences. Beset on every side, from within and from without, by change and decay, confusion, disappointment, and pain, he instinctively reaches out for that which is permanent and enduring, and only the timeless realm of the spirit is eternal.

Plato, observes Mr. Benn, had he not been a philosopher, would have been a soldier or a statesman. If so, he would have accepted his role as one whose higher loyalty was, with his true citizenship, in the unseen realm above. For we must accept as also his own the prayer in the *Phaedo* which he puts in the mouth of Socrates:

> O! beloved Pan, and the other gods who dwell here: grant me that I may be beautiful within, and that all I have of earthly things be in harmony with that which is inward. May I deem only the wise to be rich; and may my possessions be such as no other than the right-minded would bear or hold.

CHAPTER SIX

THE PERMANENT AND THE CHANGING IN LIFE — ARISTOTLE

Aristotle, in my opinion, stands almost alone in philosophy.

CICERO

I could soon get over Aristotle's prestige, if I could only get over his reasons.

LESSING

About the year 367 B.C., there came to Athens, and to the Academy of Plato, a Macedonian lad of seventeen, who remained there as student and teacher until the death of Plato twenty years later. The son of the court physician to King Amyntas, founder of the Macedonian power, Aristotle was already acquainted with the Ionian nature-philosophers and with the materialism of Democritus, and, no doubt, he had followed the bent of his mind in the direction of scientific study. In the Academy, Aristotle found himself in a new world of thought, and as the problem of life and of the universe opened out before him under the stimulation of Plato's teaching, he became, in the master's own rating ' the mind of the school.' History proves that of all Plato's pupils Aristotle profited most from the master's teachings, and yet his appreciations were selective and discriminating, and became the germs and first stages of a growing body of thought, which more nearly met the needs of his own deepening experience. Aristotle did not underestimate the valuable elements in idealism. He clearly saw that reason makes intelligible the world without and the world within, and points the way to a larger and a fuller life for man. But, he came to believe, idealism does not give a complete and detailed picture of reality. He believed his own point of view commanded a wider range of the facts of life and of the world than the idealistic point of view of Plato, and, consequently, yielded a more objective and balanced conception of truth and reality. Aristotle's shift of point of view, of course, brought a change in perspective, and the general patterns of nature and of life took on more definite outlines and more sober coloring. However, one truly understands Aristotle only when, with all his bias for realism, one fully appreciates how deeply his roots penetrated the soil of Plato's thought.

Aristotle's great love was for the concrete world of fact, but his mind was not bogged down by mere brute facts. Facts gain all their meaning for us, and their value, in the services they render in a world under the law of order and measure. Aristotle was as sure of this as Plato had been. But Aristotle's mind had an insatiable desire to know how this law of order and measure operated in the control of fact. It was the basic urge of the truly scientific mind, which made Aristotle the great naturalist of antiquity. Aristotle did not invent classification; it seems that Plato did that. But Aristotle made it the great scientific instrument for revealing the order in nature, and of rendering facts amenable to thought. The immanent teleology of Plato now came to mean for Aristotle that every fact has its part to play in the cosmic process, and the great search, for Aristotle, was just what part in this process each fact did play. The crowning generalization of this line of thinking was the concept of the universe as organism, which for Aristotle meant 'natural mechanism,' as, indeed, it signified to science and philosophy down to Kant's later period, when, for the first time, the term organism came to imply an inherent principle of unity and growth.

The personal equation of a thinker, his temperament and his intellectual qualities, will inevitably leave their traces in his outlook on life. And intellectual genius may lie in the exercise of either one of two capacities, or in both. First, in the ability to rise from a comprehensive study of pertinent facts to the great principles which explain them and interpret them; and, secondly, the power of patient and detailed analysis in carrying out to systematic completeness the implications of these principles as they find application in experience. Many outstanding thinkers in the history of philosophy have been great in one of these two directions, very few have been great in both; and of these few, history rates Aristotle the greatest in the ancient world.

Aristotle's sheer intellectuality made his break with Platonism inevitable. He was no inspired seer of the unseen and the eternal. In so far as he was seer, he envisaged the future kingdoms of science, coming by observation and induction, and extending their borders until their beneficent rule covered all the waste places in the universe. Anatomy, Biology, Botany, Ethics, Logic, Physics, Metaphysics, Politics, Poetics, Rhetoric — he founded them all, and gave most of them their names.

The first approach Aristotle made to the problem of life, as far as we have record, was given by him in a dialogue written on the death of his friend Eudemus while he was still in the Academy with Plato. At this time Aristotle believed in personal immortality, and argued for his belief in the spirit and manner of Plato's earlier period. But as his mind matured, and as his interest in the concrete and particular grew with his scientific studies, he found increasing difficulty in maintaining his early idealistic faith. It is true, he held to the teleological conception of the universe to the end of his life. It, the universe, was held to be an organic whole, which exhibits in each part something of the meaning of the total pattern. And, he admits, the inescapable implication of the network of causal connections and intelligible patterns which make the warp and woof of our actual world, postulates a Cosmic Being, who is at once both first cause and final cause of all things. These conclusions were, for Aristotle, scientifically warranted generalizations which he reached in his studies of celestial and terrestrial physics. They were scientific hypotheses involved in making the phenomena of nature intelligible. That they had no special moral or religious import to him serves to mark the distance from Plato his thought had carried him. The problem of life to Aristotle became increasingly the problem of exact knowledge. His interest was not practical, but theoretical — the detached, impersonal interest of the student. There were for him no ' lies of approximation,' or arguments to establish beliefs which we accept on instinct but cannot hope to prove.

The essentials of Aristotle's conception of the place of mind in nature as well as its place in human experience may be briefly summarized as follows: the actual world in space and time is an intelligible world, else it would be of no use to us. Which means that the structural principles of the physical universe correspond to the categories and principles of the human mind, and that the logical concept, as Socrates and Plato had always held, is the measure of truth and reality. All intelligent action, all reflective thought and knowledge about what exists and what occurs implicitly assumes this. Science, which is the systematic and exact method of extending this knowledge of our world, postulates it. It is in that sense that, to our intelligence, the rational is always implicit in the real. But to dwell on these unseen and timeless forms of reason, whether these be implicit in perceived things, or explicit in reflective consciousness, and viewing them as realities having value in themselves, would virtually be giving up the search for real knowledge. For to Aristotle, real knowledge roots in and concerns the facts of the sense-world which Plato's philosophy ignored. It is true, mathematics yields a formal or quasi sort of knowledge, a knowledge of pure quantities and their ideal space and number relations; and this sort of knowledge has its value in applied mathematics, which deals with things and occurrences in our actual world. Knowledge, it is true, is always mediated through universals; but, if it is to rate as real knowledge, it must be about particulars. And if, in one's reasoning he seeks to extend knowledge beyond the given particulars, and by induction reach laws and concepts, it is only that by the use of these he may return to the level of particulars with increased mastery of their details. Only in this way can thought enlarge the borders of knowledge. Dialectic as a method of revealing inconsistencies in thinking is an invaluable instrument. It sets forth the conditions which all definitions must satisfy whatever their subject-matter may be. But dialectic yields no knowledge. In the perception of any given thing we have the sense intuition of the impression, and at the same time we have the rational intuition of the universal or class to which the thing belongs, as when we see a bird, a tree, or a house. Nature has concrete and definite divisions, a structural framework of ' natural kinds,' within which each particular thing finds its appointed place. The purpose of the knowing act at this stage is to discover the ' natural kinds ' to which things belong in this structural framework. And when this classifying process has been carried on through species and widening circles of genera, we reach the fundamental concepts of experience, the categories, which are the ultimate condition of all predication, the basis of any thinking or knowing. But the reality which is the object of knowledge is always of particulars in the world of actuality.

All this opens the way for the conception which was Aristotle's distinctive contribution to our understanding of life and nature. If reality lodges in the concrete and particular, and not in the timeless universal, then change and becoming are at the very heart of it. Once more the issue which divided Parmenides and Heraclitus appears. Democritus thought he had settled the issue by conceiving the atomic elements as changeless, but subject to great variety of combinations in the composition of things. For Plato, a thing was merely a phenomenon, an appearance which comes into being and passes away, but the form or pattern which this phenomenon takes on, its archetype, is changeless and eternal, and is the truly real. Aristotle meets the issue with a wholly new concept — the concept of development. True reality (' that-which-is ') , he says, is not to be conceived as static, but as dynamic. It is a developmental process by which essence (' that-which-is-to-be ') becomes concretely actualized. It is potentiality unfolding itself in phenomena. To really understand what any given thing is, one must understand what it is in process of becoming. That is why we name things from their structural purpose or outcome. It is an apple tree or peach tree, because it produces apples or peaches. Each particular thing in nature has its own immanent purpose, and the cosmic process is the realization of the cosmic purpose in the endless variety of things which make up the universe. The principle which determines the 'what,' the 'why,' and the 'how' of things is thus at once the ground of being and the ground of knowing.

The full significance of Aristotle's conception of development appears first in his exposition of the nature of man. There the Platonic dualism of soul and body is resolved into a vitalistic monism. The soul is the living organism in action. The vital principle is the 'formal cause' and the 'final cause' of the body. Man is the crown of creation, the peak of the ascending scale of embodied meaning and value, because he most fully realizes in his life the teleology of the cosmic order.

A closer examination of the soul reveals it has three modes of functioning, each in its own way realizing the immanent teleology of the organism. There is, first, the soul's vegetative function, converting food into bodily tissue, growing and reproducing. Then there is the soul's animal function, sensitive to stimuli, active in impulse and in locomotion. Finally, there is the soul's rational function, active in cognition and thought and motivated by ideals of good, truth, and beauty. Trees and plants have the vegetative soul only; the life of the brute creation involves both vegetative and animal functions; the life of man functions in terms of all three.

The vegetative and animal souls perish with the body, and with the latter vanish memory, imagination, feeling, and emotion. The active or rational soul, by which Aristotle meant intellect, alone survives. Only impersonal reason lives on, eternal.

Such was, in brief, the doctrine of the soul, based on the general outcome of his world-view. What conception of human life did it afford? Apparently, Aristotle was troubled by no poignant life-issue pressing for solution; his interest in all problems arising from intellectual curiosity alone. In matters of the fundamental human institutions, Aristotle seemed to be satisfied with the *status quo,* in which attitude he was consistently Greek. Nevertheless, from the summit of his thought of the universe embodying an eternal purpose which comes to its highest expression in the soul of man, one gets a sweep of vision of the human situation wholly new to the world.

According to Aristotle, life is the serious business of managing human affairs with discrimination in the light of the soul's immanent purpose. It is for the individual in the nature of a great journey, requiring care in picking one's way past obstacles and bypaths in order that he may reach his destination in safety. It is comparable to the painstaking but satisfying labor of the husbandman who, by knowing his vine, his soil, when and how to prune, and the dangers of blight, knows how to come with full vintage at the end. Life seeks to discover its true pattern in the midst of things in the time-world below, just as Raphael's fresco indicates, and not in contemplation of the eternal ideas in the timeless-world above. For the immanent teleology of the soul's threefold functions proclaims their earthly tasks. As all action, all thought is directed toward some end, and as most ends when attained prove to be only means or steps in the realization of more remote ends, there must be some ultimate end or supreme good which gives law to the whole of life, and is the satisfaction of all desire. All agree that there is but one thing which is desired for its own sake, and for whose sake everything else is desired, and that one thing is happiness. But what is happiness? That is an old question. Aristippus had led in saying pleasure is happiness, and the Cyrenaics were still saying it. Aristotle, largely following Plato's reasoning, has his answer to the Cyrenaic thesis. Pleasure is, indeed, a good, but it can be the good of life only to those who accept the measure of a child's mind as a man's standard of value. Mental maturity brings with it the privilege of citizenship in the world of struggle and achievement, with its attendant joys and sorrows. In the determination of life's supreme good, therefore, the welfare of the whole self is to decide, and in this total welfare, ' well-doing ' as well as ' well-being ' is to be considered. So, concludes Aristotle, ' the happy life seems to be according to virtue.' Only in achieving, which sums up all our powers, and which brings with it its own peculiar satisfaction, is the true *summum bonum* revealed. It is not sufficient to say, as Plato said, that man's highest good is realized in tracing in his life the heavenly pattern of an eternal ideal of goodness; rather, it is realized in the consciousness of self-realization, and reflects the particular nature and needs of the human organism, and is valid for it alone.

As this conception is one of the chief culminations of Aristotle's thought, it would not be amiss to summarize at this point. The human soul is organic in nature, and, as such, it is the crown of the total organism, i.e., the universe. Its own peculiar teleology is revealed in its several functions. Moreover, as organic, the soul has its own needs, and its needs determine what is good for it. Hence all the values of life are but evaluations of the objects which call them forth, and reveal the number and variety of the soul's needs. Each value is, in its own way and degree, one of the 'goods' of life. The life of the mere animal, and of the young child, is satisfied with the mere succession of immediate 'goods.' But not so with the mentally mature. His life has an inner coherence of meaning in which past and future play their part, together with the present, in the pursuit of remote ends. As Plato had said, man is the spectator of all times and all existence, and his 'good,' his happiness is built on the way nature and the interests of his fellow men meet his various needs. His sense needs are many, but they are subordinate, and the world is there to meet them. His intellectual needs, awakened in his attempts to cope with the forces of nature, bring order and law into his conceptual world, and the establishing of the sciences, which open the way to self-realization.

Aristotle followed Greek tradition in conceiving 'good' as a relative term, measured by the quality and extent of service. The goodness of any animate being consists in the way its organic functions meet their respective ends. It is a good fig tree if it produces figs. The goodness — or in Aristotle's idiom — the virtue of a war-horse lies in its speed and in its standing the attack of the enemy. In the case of man, his excellence does not consist in doing one thing, as is the case of the fig tree; nor is it the excellence in doing a few things, as is the case of the war-horse. The uniqueness of man lies in the complexity of his nature. His needs are many and varied, and so are the functions which make up his life. And while each function has its specific excellence, the excellence or virtue of man lies in the unity and balance in which these several functions co-operate in the realization of the teleology of the whole man. The good of the whole is the law of the parts; the well-being of the organism is the regulative principle of the several organs, which preserves the pattern of the well-rounded, complete life.

But this full, harmonious working together of all our powers is no free gift of nature. While Aristotle is emphatic in holding that nature is the beginning of everything, he is equally emphatic in holding that nature perfects nothing. 'We can go right in only one way,' he says, 'but it is possible to go wrong in many ways.' And again — 'It is easy to miss a mark, but difficult to hit it.' Aristotle is quite specific on this point. The vines do not dress themselves, nor do the appetites set bounds to indulgence. Nor are accomplished flute-players and harpists produced without intelligence and patient discipline. An enlightened principle of selection and control must intervene, to serve as maxim for its guidance, if life is to be virtuous and truly happy. The classical adage, 'nothing too much,' now enters as the Aristotelian principle of the 'Golden Mean,' according to which the way of virtue is the middle way between possible extremes, a maxim reminiscent of Gautama's 'Middle Path,' and the balanced virtues of the Confucian Analects. It takes brains to be virtuous. It takes watchfulness, good judgment, and decisiveness to determine for an individual how much work and how much play, how far yielding to external pressure and how much resistance, is consistent with high character. The virtue which the wise man seeks, he says, is 'a habit, accompanied by deliberate preference, of maintaining, with the guidance of right reason, a medium course between extremes in conduct.' Rashness is folly and cowardice is base, but courage is excellent. To be prodigal and to be penurious are equally to be condemned, but to be liberal is praiseworthy. Likewise, magnificence is midway between profusion and shabby meanness. And one could go on to speak of modesty, meekness, decorum, benevolence, and other qualities of character as exemplifying the excellent middle course of virtue. That Aristotle realized the great difficulties involved in the application of this principle in concrete situations, and that the principle itself failed to account for some of the recognized virtues, is abundantly evident. But he was justly convinced that the principle was an excellent guide in establishing an ethical habit of mind, and gave due recognition to the relativity of moral judgment. One's highest good is not a fixed, changeless ideal, to be determined with mathematical certainty, and for all persons alike. Rather, it is to be determined by each individual for himself and varied to meet the changing situations of life. What would be courage, or temperance, or liberality in one situation would not be the same in another. Even so, the basic oneness of human nature, and the general sameness of the human situation, insures common ground for social intercourse.

The keynote of Aristotle's philosophy of life is the sober conviction that the complete life is no light achievement to be taken in one's stride, and that it is not realized when caught up in mountain-top experiences. Like the work of the artist and the scholar, it is not left to the free inclination of the moment. Greatness of soul and established character are the fruits of a completely fashioned will, when noble choice and conduct have become second nature. Here, Aristotle's philosophy of life transcends the intellectualism of Socrates and Plato, in holding that the virtues of life do not draw their quality and authority from insight and vision, but from education of the will and habit. Like the excellence of the musician's art, the virtue, and consequently the happiness, of the efficient life is conditioned on the constancy of disciplined effort.

But man's life is not complete in himself alone. He is a social animal, 'more social than ant or bee.' Consequently, his natural impulse is to build his life into the political framework of the state, and realize his good under the protection of organized society and be served by its institutions. Here again it is not Aristotle the man, voicing his own needs, who speaks, but Aristotle the student of government and of peoples, giving the results of his observations and inferences. Circumstances favored this natural inclination to take only the scholar's interest in political and social institutions. For, although he spent the greater part of his life in Athens, and at a time when the state suffered from lack of leadership, his Macedonian birth and lifelong friendship with Alexander the Great, together with his well-known admiration for the efficiency of the Macedonian monarchy, made him seem alien to the Athenian spirit, and kept his political interest purely academic.

However, any adequate theory of the good life will culminate in a social ethics and a philosophy of government. He goes that far with Plato. Virtue bears its finest fruit only in social relations. Consequently, morality comes to its full realization only in the state. In the first place, the community interest, the well-being of the many is a richer and a higher good than are the personal interests of the individual. And even the personal and private good of the individual is secured only by the corrective agencies of the state. It is the very genius of the state to serve as a glorified pedagogical institution, bringing out man's undeveloped potentialities and making possible the efficient life.

Aristotle's portrait of the 'great-souled man' represented the type he deemed best fitted to realize the possibilities of the efficient life. He conceived of the virtues of such a man as wholly æsthetic at the roots. His lofty soul spurns both meanness of spirit and vanity, because both are cheap and vulgar. His superiority to other men consists in his self-respect which forbids his participating in commercial and industrial pursuits or meeting the common people on a social level. He is generous and honorable, gracious and magnanimous, because his patrician spirit is immune to the appeals of the sordid and the commonplace. It is a picture of the intellectual aristocrat, too wise to be vulgar and too superior to be mean.

On this level Aristotle approached the subject of friendship and its place in life, a topic already congenial to Greek thought, and one which evoked all the ideality he could think or feel of human relationship. Friendship, said Aristotle, is the finest flower of the 'magnanimous' spirit. True friendship can exist only where it springs from wholly disinterested motives, even when the giver's life is consciously enriched by it. It must be based on esteem and admiration, and grows only as new worthiness is discovered in the friend. It lifts one above the sordid and mean, and helps to stabilize his character, for true friends love only the finer qualities in each other, and are held by them. One's joys are doubled by sharing them with his friend, and the bitterness of his sorrow is taken away. The 'magnanimous' soul never rises to greater heights than when, through self-sacrificing loyalty to his friend, he has done him a great service. We need friends at every stage of life and in every condition. It is the one personal bond, natural to all human beings, which unites us in a common life of good-will and mutual helpfulness.

But, in the applications of these noble sentiments, it must be borne in mind that the Greeks, in common with all peoples of antiquity, failed to recognize the rights of personality, as such, or realize a just sense of the sanctity of human life, and that Aristotle's philosophy of life was hampered by the same limitations. His contributions to science and to philosophy were impressive, and he was complete master of the methods of the intellectual life, but he was no prophet of the soul. Aristotle was the kind of man who has, indeed, a philosophy of life, but seems to be more concerned in the outcome of some material project that claims his attention. He represents that great class of individuals, sometimes referred to as extraverts, who may be industrious, broad-minded, and just, but seldom religious. The mystics have always found comfort and inspiration in Plato; the scholastics have accepted Aristotle as their master and guide. For Aristotle, the divine, to be sure, is the better life; but his God is the First Cause of the Metaphysics. He is the explanation of the order and the intelligibility of the cosmos. Aristotle's conception of God has always been a trump card in the hand of the theologian, but it has offered little to the soul seeking comfort and support of the inner life. It was Cardinal Newman who said that, 'while we are men we cannot help to a great extent being Aristotelians,—that we are his disciples whether we will or no.' He was, and continues to be, 'the master of those who know.'

CHAPTER SEVEN

LIFE'S DEFENCE AGAINST A FAILING CIVILIZATION — EPICURUS

'Tis Greece, but living Greece no more.
BYRON

In a letter to his disciple, Menoeceus, Epicurus begins his exposition of his theory of life in these words: ' Let no one when young delay to study philosophy, nor when he is old grow weary of his study. For no one can come too early or too late to secure the health of his soul. And the man who says the age for philosophy has either not come or has gone by is like the man who says the age for happiness has not yet come to him, or has already passed away.'

However, by philosophy Epicurus meant merely the practical art of keeping happy under controlled circumstances. To Plato and to Aristotle it had meant the endeavor to read aright the meaning and purpose of life in its relation to the universe and to live in harmony with that purpose. It had meant to bring the known facts of men and of nature under one inclusive hypothesis that would satisfy both the ideals of conscience and the logical tests of knowledge. It was a much simpler matter with Epicurus. Life, to him, had no meaning as a whole. There was no thread of purpose running through the days and years bringing unity and meaning into them all. Conscious existence was, to him, merely a fact, to be accepted without why or wherefore, and to be used discreetly with the minimum expenditure of effort and discomfort to oneself. The wisdom of life, according to him, carries no obligation beyond the borders of the individual's own happiness, and there is no authority higher than the law of one's personal welfare. ' Health of soul,' which meant to him absence of disturbing fears and pains, and ' happiness,' which meant a state of repose of body and mind, were words constantly on his lips, and represented about all that was original and essential in his philosophy. It is true, Epicurus annexed the outspoken materialism of Democritus, a thinker of no mean caliber, but he added nothing to his borrowings that did not weaken their force. Epicurus really had no need of a metaphysics, except as a substitute for the spiritual conceptions of Plato and Aristotle, to be used as a weapon against the popular superstitions of his day.

The *summum bonum* of life for Epicurus was happiness, as it had been for Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. But real happiness, as Plato and Aristotle had conceived it, was a spiritual achievement and out of reach of all but the few disciplined souls who could pay the price. The average individual of moderate capacity, inclined to take his world as he finds it, and intent only on making the most of it, asks for a philosophy that meets him on his own ground and makes few demands. To such, the thought of Epicurus came, and has always come, as a most welcome method of rationalizing his practical notions of life's values and conduct.

The exposition Epicurus gives of his conception of life is easy to follow. Some desires we have are native or ' natural,' he says, and some are acquired in the life-history of the individual. Of the first class, some are necessary and must be satisfied. ' The flesh cries out to be saved from hunger, thirst and cold; it is dangerous to disregard nature's appeal.' But other natural desires are ' merely natural,' lacking the force of necessity, such as the inclination to overindulge one's appetite, to yield to mere instinctive impulse in whatever direction. The technique of a happy life, then, involves the weeding out and suppressing of these ' vain ' and ' merely natural ' desires, and the careful examination of those ' necessary ' ones, the satisfying of which contributes to health of mind and body. These necessary desires will then be found to fall into three groups: first, those which are necessary for the maintenance of life itself; secondly, all those desires which enhance physical comfort and ' repose of body '; and thirdly, the desires of the mind which bring release from worry and which give us the feeling of peace and happiness. 'The right understanding of these facts,' said Epicurus, ' enables us to refer all choice and avoidance to the health of the body and the soul's freedom from disturbance, since this is the aim of the life of blessedness.' And it was the highest wisdom of the Epicurean philosophy as well.

Such were the hub-ideas round which the system of Epicurus revolved, and which remained intact among his followers as the rallying center of Epicureanism for more than five hundred years. They were not so much the conclusions of critical thinking as expressions of the personal equation of Epicurus himself. The life-views of Plato and of Aristotle were the hard-won victories of years of intellectual conflict over half-truths and partial insights, and their writings show that in the course of their intellectual history these men moved from one position to another in their quest for the larger truth. Properly speaking, Epicurus never had an intellectual history. He came upon his ideas by the easy path of seeking what was most congenial to his temperament. His boast that he was self-taught really meant that he borrowed what he wanted from the writings of his predecessors, fitting his borrowings into the pattern of thought dictated by the logic of his own personal equation. And his genius for such a task was attested in his own day and in the centuries following by the many who found in his way of life the answer to all their questions.

Born in 342 in Samos, Epicurus was the son of an Athenian who had migrated to Asia Minor as school teacher. According to the meager record of his early years, he followed in his father's profession, first at Colophon, and then at Mytilene and Lampsacus, coming to Athens in 306, in his thirty-sixth year, where he shortly afterward founded his own school of philosophy. How he prepared for his task was a matter on which even his own followers could not agree. It was reported by one of his own time that the words of Democritus, whose cosmology Epicurus adopted, first turned his mind toward philosophy, and it is most probable that he was well-acquainted with the pleasure-theory of Aristippus and his Cyrenaic followers before he left Colophon. For when he came to Mytilene in his thirty-second year he was sufficiently grounded in his own theory of happiness to open a school of philosophy. How firmly grounded he was is evident from the fact that when he moved his school to Lampsacus, he took with him his favorite disciple who became his successor in the headship of the school. With the added prestige won at Lampsacus, he was able to carry a number of his followers with him to Athens, among whom were Metrodorus and Polyaenus, his two best-known disciples. Athens had lost her independence, and, with few exceptions, her creative minds had gone for ever. Epicureanism was the sort of philosophy peculiarly adapted to the needs of those of the people who accepted defeat.

A hundred years earlier the worldly Aristippus, son of a rich merchant of Cyrene, was drawn by the fame of Socrates to Athens, and there gave the shortest and simplest answer ever given to the master's query concerning the *summum bonum.* It is pleasure, he said, the enjoyment of the moment, the thrill of mental or bodily gratification. Life is lived moment by moment, and pleasures must be enjoyed in the present, if at all. The past is gone, and the future is yet to come; only the present is ours. Why, then, let remorse for what has been done, or regret for what has been left undone, spoil for us our present and only good? And why look ahead, and worry about pleasures to come? Sufficient unto the day is the pleasure thereof.

Now, the underlying thought of all this seemed indefeasible to Epicurus, and suggested the idea which was to become the cornerstone of his own system. Pleasure, or happiness as he preferred to call it, is indeed the only absolute good, and pain or discomfort the only absolute evil. All conscious life is spontaneously motivated by desire for gratification. But Epicurus saw that the thought of consequences could not be excluded from the present enjoyment. Real happiness dies if confined to the present moment. Plato had made that clear in one of his earlier dialogues, and it was a fact Epicurus had no doubt learned from Pamphilius. At any rate, the inevitable intervention of thought in the blessed state of happiness was the decisive factor in shaping his conception of the good life. ' No pleasure is a bad thing in itself, but the means by which some pleasures are produced bring with them disturbances many times greater than the pleasures,' he said. And again, 'It is not possible to live pleasantly without living prudently.'

By taking thought, then, human life can be so ordered that the maximum of pleasure and the minimum of pain and disturbance will be experienced. Obviously, this sets a problem which each individual must solve for himself. But for the individual's guidance, the wisdom of experience, which Epicurus proceeds to set forth, furnishes certain maxims of prudence. 'The satisfactions which nature supplies are definite and are easy to procure, but the unattainable satisfactions of vain imagining are infinite.' Hence the curbing of wants rather than the increase of possessions is the true way to riches and contentment. 'To grow accustomed to a simple diet gives us health to the full, and makes a man alert for the needful employments of life.' Epicurus was no epicure, whether in theory or in practice, contrary to popular tradition, which is generally wrong in such matters. He wrote in one of his letters to a friend that he had learned to be content with bread and water, but adds that he would welcome a bit of cheese as a real luxury. 'The man who does not know how to be satisfied with little will never be satisfied at all.' But one must not carry abstinence too far, or think that abstaining is an end in itself. 'Frugality, too, has a limit, and the man who disregards this is in like case with him who errs through excess.'

But incitements to seek wealth, fame, popularity, social and political prestige and power are also to be restrained and regulated. Each of these opens up new and insidious ways of disturbing one's peace of mind and happiness. Especially against the vain hopes and ambitions fostered by ones' social environment should he be on guard. 'Live unknown,' is the wisest rule to follow. Shun competitions, he said, and remember that a free life cannot acquire, or hold, many possessions. After all, 'Self sufficiency is the greatest of all riches.'

Diogenes reports in his summary of the ethical maxims of Epicurus that the master taught that passionate love was an irreconcilable enemy of true happiness from whom one buys peace of mind at great expense. It is doubtful if marriage has helped any man, he said, and one may be well content if it does him no harm. It is difficult to lay down an invariable rule. Generally, he believed, the wise man will not marry or beget children. Still, he thought, under certain circumstances he will forsake the rule without suffering unfortunate consequences.

The greatest destroyers of our peace of mind are the idle fears which spring from ignorance and superstition, against which Epicureanism waged unrelenting warfare. And chief of all fears is the fear of death, against whose coming there is no security. In this respect, he says, all mortals alike dwell in an unfortified city. But why dread it? Death can do us no harm, for as long as we live, death has not come; and when death does come, we shall then be gone. Then there are the groundless fears that are nourished by ignorance of the laws of nature, and the superstitious dread of unseen powers. To emancipate men from the fear of demons and demi-urges who were supposed to tyrannize over them, some reasoned account of natural causes was required, and three of the greatest systems of antiquity were available for that purpose. Aristotle's system of development had just been completed, and the Stagarite had retired to Chalcis the year Epicurus arrived at Athens. Plato had died twenty-five years earlier, and his idealistic doctrine was well known in all Greek cities. Epicurus passed by both of these systems and chose the atomic theory of the universe of Democritus, an older contemporary of Socrates and Plato, which was more to his liking. The conceptions of Plato and Aristotle were frankly teleological, and their spiritual implications were peculiarly repugnant to Epicurus. For him no threads of meaning and purpose gave pattern and beauty to the fabric of life, and he read no implications of mind in the law and order of natural processes. A universe conceived as an infinite number of atoms eternally in motion following the law of mechanical necessity would exclude the notion of divine intervention in earthly affairs and be an effective weapon against the whole brood of superstitions. And, with the assumption that the finest and most active of the atoms compose the soul, and possess the unique capacity of spontaneous motion (here he breaks with Democritus and with mechanism, to help out his own theory), provision was made for freedom of the will. In this way, Epicurus hoped to deliver the soul from all superstitious fears that celestial beings hold power over human lives, and, at the same time, to give the individual the belief that he held the supreme power over his own destiny. He further hoped to end the fruitless speculation concerning the reality of life after death, for, with the dissolving of the temporary union of atoms composing the soul at death, the belief in immortality becomes absurd.

All the more important is it, therefore, that the wise man make sound investments in the life that now is. The summer is soon gone, and each fruit is to be enjoyed in its season, untroubled by the conflicts and uncertainties of life. The philosopher Heraclitus had said: ' The striving of opposites is a good thing, and out of the blending of differences come the loveliest harmonies; indeed, all things come about through strife.' But Heraclitus was a robust soul and rejoiced to find the law of conflict in the inner life was the same as the law of opposing forces in the great universe without. Epicurus was a timid soul. Always of delicate constitution, his theory and manner of life reflected his shrinking from everything virile and adventurous. Retiring to his house and garden in the outskirts of Athens, he spent the thirty-six years as head of his school, surrounded by devoted followers, expounding the blessed life of untrammeled leisure and tranquillity. Had he possessed the element of mysticism in his composition he would have become the founder of a monastic order. His dominantly hedonistic temper, however, held him back from such a step. The simple life, emancipated from all unnecessary burdens and responsibilities, met his every need. ' I have met thee, O Fortune,' he said, ' and intrenched myself against all thy secret attacks. And we will not give ourselves up as captives to thee or to any other circumstance; but when it is time for us to go, spitting contempt on life and on those who here vainly cling to it, we will leave life crying aloud a glorious triumph-song that we have lived well.' And the record shows that he lived and died in just this fashion.

But it should not have escaped notice that he could not have attained his end had it not been for the aid of friends who gave unstintingly the needed material and moral support to his enterprise. Friendship played a significantly important role in the life of Epicurus, and he was singularly happy in his friends. It is worth noting that he was consistently Epicurean in his conception of friendship; if you want friends let them do something for you; the investment of their service in you will bind them to you. ' No one loves another except for his own interest,' he said. ' Human nature alone does not give natural affection for nothing, nor can it love without advantage to itself.' One can imagine Epicurus sitting in the circle of admiring followers talking over the psychology of human relations. He is no friend who will not come to our help when needed, and we are not friends to him if we refuse his help, or abuse his willingness to help. For there is a subtle alchemy in us which converts both giving and receiving into happiness. To be surrounded by loyal friends gives us the peace and serenity which is the ' health of the soul.'

The Epicurean programme, conceived strictly on the lines of its founder, would inevitably be the creed of the few. Its strongest appeal would be to timid souls in delicate bodies, and to the disillusioned. It could be no help to the man who must suffer in the bitterness of solitude, or to one burdened with a social conscience. Even the qualified Epicureanism, which is the dream of the many, is an impracticable scheme of life, for it would tend to destroy the very conditions requisite for its success. For, as Eucken has so well stated: ' It implies a highly developed state of civilization, refined taste, noble sentiment, a joy in the good and the beautiful, without which life would become empty and rude. But Epicureanism does not tend to produce a civilization by its own toil and sacrifices: for the sensuous, natural being, above which its conceptions do not rise, there is arbitrarily substituted a cultivated personality swayed by moral and intellectual interests. Thus this view of life feeds as a parasite at strangers' tables; the labor of others must create what it forthwith appropriates to its own enjoyment, or, in meditation, resolves into maxims of prudence. . . . All the shrewdness, cleverness, and amiability it possesses cannot compensate for its fatal lack of spiritual productivity.' In spite of this — or, perhaps, because of it — Epicureanism has always had its conspicuous following.

Plato's thought represented the attitude of mind of one who, in the midst of the endless variety and beauty of the visible world about us, is haunted by the felt presence of the invisible and eternal order which is the source of all their higher meanings and values. For Plato, and afterward for the Stoics, the dignity and the beauty of life grew out of man's relation to this unseen universe. Over against this view of self-subordination as the law of life, Epicurus set his own hedonist principle of self-assertion. Both principles are deeply rooted in human nature. History was to prove that as life deepened, philosophy's most persistent problem would be the adjustment of their just but difficult claims.

CHAPTER EIGHT

LIFE'S DEFENCE AGAINST A FAILING CIVILIZATION — THE STOIC

Life is short at best. Live as on a mountain-top. It matters not whether your place be here or there. Wherever you are, be a citizen of the city of the world. Let men see and witness a true man, — one who lives in conformity to Nature.

MARCUS AURELIUS

GREEK philosophy, as well as Greek literature and art, were the natural offspring of political independence and expressed something of the spirit of their national unity, but history proves that a nation's cultural achievements may reach their highest pinnacle of glory in the day of the people's humiliation, when political institutions are tottering and the end is near. This was true of the achievements of Greece with respect to philosophy. The most brilliant century of the world's intellectual history was the fifth century before the Christian era, and the culminating century of Greek national life. Hellenic genius had had its rebirth in the heroic deeds done at Marathon and at Salamis, when on two occasions the Persian hordes had been hurled back in utter defeat. It had seemed to the Hellenes that the stars in their courses had fought against the arrogance of Darius and Xerxes, and out of their exalted sense of national destiny, the idealism of Greek genius blossomed in the rare cultural achievements of the Periclean Age. And then, after the death of Pericles, when the state was weakened by internal dissentions and corruption, judicial blindness fell upon the leaders, and the disasters of civil war completed the ruin. On the plain of Chaeronea, at the close of the century, Greek independence went down before the arms of Philip of Macedon. And in the realm of culture, the creative works of poet and artist were finished, and the reflective work of the philosopher began. Greek idealism came to its highest philosophic expression in the fourth century in the systems of Plato and Aristotle. In these systems Greek philosophy made its greatest contribution to Western civilization.

There are at least two conceivable attitudes which an active mind might take toward the problem of life in the time of hopeless national decay. One of these would be the attitude of withdrawal from the situation entirely, and the taking up of the practice of the art of happiness as a private enterprise, without dependence on the well-being of others. Such was the attitude taken by Epicurus. Because of it Nietzsche called him the first decadent. The other alternative was chosen by a group of thinkers who have been known to the world as Stoics. To them, life in the midst of national decay is not hopeless; but hope does not lie in the rebirth of nationalism. The Stoic philosophy of life stood for the thesis that the state could never be the object of the soul's supreme devotion and loyalty. Man's true citizenship is not an earthly affair amidst shifting political institutions, where the individual is set over against his fellow in mutual jealousy and conflict, but in a heavenly city, in which all the peoples of the earth are one. The Stoic held that individualism, as a philosophy of life, is cheap and barren, a mere makeshift in a time of breakdown of old loyalties. It can never be the last word in a growing mind or a deepening personality. In Stoicism, philosophy undertook to show that man truly finds himself only as he turns toward the eternal and all-inclusive Other of the human spirit; that he finds his true freedom and his understanding of life only as he finds that larger Unity which makes him one with himself and with his brother man.

The Stoic thought started back in the Cynic doctrine of Antisthenes, one of the followers of Socrates, for whom the *summum bonum* came to mean the freedom of the completely self-sufficient life. Antisthenes held that wisdom dictated complete indifference to outer circumstances — to pleasure as well as to pain, to fame and honor, and to luxury of every sort. To depend on such as these for one's happiness, would be only putting one's self at the mercy of external circumstances over which one has no control. He who indulges in pleasure is the slave of pleasure. The only truly free life is one that habitually cultivates indifference — apathy. The few fragments of the early Stoics which have come down to us clearly show the influence of this Cynic doctrine, and marks a break from the traditional Socratic emphasis, and the emergence of a new motive in Greek philosophy. Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle were consistent intellectualists. For them the concept was the measure of truth and reality. To them the supreme good was realized in knowledge, in vision, in understanding, as mediated by thought. Emotion and will were bound up with our physical nature, and had not the status nor the authority of intellect, which alone yields us the ' white, dry light of truth.' Epicurus had already broken with Socratic tradition in finding his *summum bonum* in feeling, and now the Stoics, following the Cynics, put the center of gravity of the good life in terms of will-attitude. The shift of emphasis from intellect to feeling and to will marks the beginning of the influence of Eastern motives in Greek philosophy, a shift that was destined to leave its effects in Western thought down to modern times.

Stoicism differs from all other conceptions of life that have come down to us in that it was not the utterance of one mind, nor of one age, nor indeed of one land and people. As we have it, it was the aggregate experience of five hundred years of living and thinking in the midst of the break-up of old civilizations, and when a new world was coming into being. The Epicurean doctrine came down side by side during these same five centuries, remaining unchanged in every detail. Epicurus had poured in the mordant himself. But from the first the Stoic thinkers were chiefly concerned about the fundamentals of doctrine, being willing that practical necessities should dictate the form which the theory should take. ' Give me the principles,' said Chrysippus to his teacher Cleanthes, ' the proofs I can find for myself.' And these, with Zeno, were the founders of the Stoic school. As only fragments of these early Greek Stoics have come down to us, their full conception of life and of the universe must be derived from citations taken from other classical writers, especially from the works of the Roman Stoics, Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius.

The doctrine originated in the mind of Zeno, a man of Semitic origin, who came as a youth to Athens in the last quarter of the fourth century from the Phoenician colony of Citium, in Cyprus. Already, the fame of Athens as the seat of rival schools of philosophy had gone abroad, and it could have been said at that time, as it was said in Paul's day, that the Athenians and the strangers there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell or to hear some new thing. Zeno weighed the claims of the rival teachers — Crates, the Cynics, Stilpo, the Megarian, the successors of Plato in the Academy and those of Aristotle in the Lyceum — but reserved his allegiance. Rugged and forthright in speech, he did not hesitate to say that the way of life proposed by Epicurus was the way of the epigoni. Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle had spent their lives in the study of man, but had failed to reach a full conception of personality, owing to their intellectualistic bias. Zeno believed a worthy life required a positive creed of heroic and self-sacrificing quality. Knowledge is not all of life, nor is pleasure. It is also reverence and loyalty that command whole-hearted obedience, and the joys of a satisfied will. Zeno found that among his contemporaries only the Cynics had even a tempered sympathy with such a view.

Toward the close of the fourth century Zeno was sufficiently established in his own convictions to found his own school in the Painted Porch, or Stoa, a colonnade in the Market-place, where he expounded his philosophy until his death in the year 265. Cleanthes, a native of Assos in the Troad, who followed him as the head of the school, was a man of like energy and firmness of character, who maintained the tradition for thirty years until his pupil Chrysippus took over the leadership. By this time the Stoic attitude toward the recognized problems of philosophy was already clearly established, being fairly represented by a remark attributed to Aristo of Chios, another of Zeno's followers: ' Of the various subjects of philosophical investigation, some are of concern to us, some do not interest us at all, and some lie beyond our reach. The problems of Ethics are of the first class; logic and dialectic are of the second; and physics is of the third.'

Chrysippus, called by his contemporaries the second founder of Stoicism, was a native of Soli in Cilicia, and in addition to unusual qualities of leadership he possessed a mind of great versatility. He was the chief literary representative of the school in its early period, and the one best qualified to bring the various teachings of the school to a consistent whole. Under his hand the Stoic doctrine was broadened and systematized, and took the form that has given it the place it holds in the history of thought.

Aided by the breaking down of national barriers by the conquests of Alexander, the Stoic conception of life spread widely through the then known world, and by the end of the second century there were flourishing schools in Tarsus, Rhoades, Carthage, Alexandria, and Rome, besides which there were influential followers in Antioch, Sidon, and Seleucia. One of these Stoics found a patron in Ptolemy IV, who made him librarian of the Alexandrian library. Stoicism came to Rome about the middle of the second century. Crates, librarian of Pergamus, had come there to lecture on Greek literature in 159 B.C. and four years later, representatives of the Academy, of the Lyceum and of the Stoa came from Athens to expound their respective doctrines. The Stoic school at Rome was founded by Panaetius A.D. 129. In this Roman stage, its last stage, it became less of a philosophy and more of a practical way of life — a religion. But the essentials of the Stoic creed remained to the end what they were with Zeno at the beginning. What was this Stoic creed?

Zeno brought to his task two convictions won by sifting the arguments of the rival schools. First, he was convinced that the problem of human life was but a part of the larger problem of the universe, and must be dealt with as such. The writings of Plato and of Aristotle had made that clear, and even the Epicureans were forced to acknowledge it, after a fashion. Then he was further convinced that one must conceive the universe either as a mere aggregate of atoms, eternally in motion, but without plan or purpose, or he must conceive it as an organic whole, a true universe, each part obeying the inner law of unity of the whole. On this alternative Zeno took his stand with Plato and Aristotle, and with Heraclitus and Anaxagoras of an earlier day, while Epicurus elected to stand by the atomic theory of Democritus.

The universe as a whole is under the unchangeable law of the whole, which is the ultimate fact for man and nature. On the foundation of this thesis Zeno undertook to erect his theory of the universe, and, in doing so, he passed by Plato and Aristotle, and went back to Heraclitus of Ephesus for guidance and help. Zeno lacked Aristotle's scientific interest in the world of fact. The nature he saw was the Cosmic Order. Plato's dialectic was, to him, rambling and inconclusive; Zeno's mind was pragmatic, seeking direct, positive affirmations. He was particularly attracted to the saying of Heraclitus that 'the only piece of real wisdom is to grasp that principle which of itself will govern everything on every occasion.' Such a principle, in Zeno's own judgment, was Heraclitus' own concept of the ultimate reality as a dynamic principle, generating by inner necessity the world of order and reason. Diodotus, who later expounded the Stoic doctrine to Cicero, put the school's estimate of its importance when he referred to it as 'a well-compacted helm to lead a man straight through the path of life.'

The unreflective man, said Zeno, tends to think of himself as an independent unit in this world, complete in himself, and that his own private good is the ultimate criterion for acceptance or rejection, as Epicurus would say. Therein lies the root of every trouble and every failure in life. True wisdom begins with the individual when he reckons himself as a mere fragment of a great and perfect whole, the universe, whose perfection is the rational standard of all real values. Just as the meaning and value of roots and leaves derive from their place and function in the life of the plant, so whatever significance any human life may win for itself will depend on its overcoming its fragmentariness in loyal service to the ideal of the whole. Zeno held it to be an inspiring thought that a single human life is a part, even an insignificant part, of the universal world-order. For the Cosmos is boundless and its duration is eternal, and, in and through it all, it is Mind. As Heraclitus had said, and Anaxagoras after him, mind, logos, is the animating, all-pervading active principle in all things. For this ' One and All,' the Stoic had several names. It was called Cosmos when he thought of it as embodied law and order. It was Nature, or, in the Greek, *Fusis* (' the way things grow '), when he had in mind the living, generative principle which begets all things, and shapes their form and development. As ultimate being, the name was God, Soul of the Universe, the Universal Law. Whatever name was for the moment given, all others were implicit. The religious implication of the conceived principle came to full consciousness in the Hymn of Cleanthes, and in the thoughts of the Roman Stoics, especially Marcus Aurelius. If this view should be identified as materialistic it would be because Zeno was groping for a way of saying that God is not afar off, unknown to us and a stranger to the human situation. The universe was to him a warm, living whole, the embodiment of purpose and reason, and far from being the cold, dead thing of modern mechanism.

On the basis of this conception of ultimate being, the Stoic reared his philosophy of the good life of freedom through harmony with the universal law. The theory was at once a protest against Greek intellectualistic bias, and an affirmation that will is the creative principle of all dignity and worth in human life. The essence of good and of evil lies in the attitude of the will, as Epictetus put it. We accept the universal law as the *summum bonum* by an act of will. And it is by a firmly established habit of will that wisdom and freedom become established in our lives. Each man has the choice whether he shall live as on a mountain, seeing things in their true perspective, or whether he shall live on the low marsh lands of blind impulse and private interest. And to the Stoics, the choice involved the transvaluation of all his values. What he has once prized as his chief goods — riches, honors, health, fame, even life itself — are taken at their proper values, or on occasion to be reckoned as indifferent. Only one thing is truly good — virtue, which is living each day in the attitude of tranquil obedience to the law of Nature as the providence of God. The freedom of the Stoic, then, was the freedom of faith; his tranquillity was the sense of sharing in the eternal life of the universe. Seneca bespoke the attitude of the later Stoics when he said: ' I do not obey God. I agree with him. I go with him heart and soul, not because I must.'

Stoicism thus becomes in the final analysis the philosophy of the inner life, and its chief problem is the problem of evil. Two of the three classical proposals for the solution of that problem play leading roles in the Stoic attempt to explain the presence of evils in the universe, which is the embodiment of eternal truth and goodness. According to one explanation, good and evil are distinctions which imply different points of view in our judgments of the value of things. Our troubles — our pains and sorrows and losses — are evils when taken in connection with our personal system of interests and comfort, but what value do they acquire when viewed from the point of view of the eternal order of things? The disagreeable or unlovely phenomena of nature or of experience are the inevitable consequences of the development of the world and are justified by the character of the cosmic progress. ' One and all, we work toward one perfect consummation,' said Marcus Aurelius, ' some knowingly and with intelligence, others unconsciously and without purpose. One works in one way, and another in another way; and not least he who finds fault, and who tries to resist and undo what is done. Even of such the world has need.' Taken by itself, the quarrel between Achilles and Agamemnon over the slave girl Briseis was an unlovely thing, but what would the Iliad be without it?

' The reckless deeds of sinful man
Whose own hearts led them to perversity.'

will be turned at last into good, sang Cleanthes in his Hymn, for

' Thou knowest to make the crooked straight;
Chaos to thee is order; in thine eyes
The unloved is lovely, who didst harmonize
Things evil with things good, that there should be
Eternal Reason through things everlasting.'

According to the other explanation, the misfortunes and hardships of life are necessary factors in the development of character, and, therefore, are not to be reckoned as evils. ' No man knows his own strength or value but by being put to the proof. The pilot is tried by the storm, the soldier in a battle, but the rich man knows not how to behave in poverty, said Seneca. ' Calamity is the occasion of a virtue, and the spur of a great mind.' ' The old soldier knows that a man may lose blood and yet win the day.'

In the application of this high doctrine to the affairs of daily life the control of imagination is the first step of importance, for vain hopes and fears are the bane of human life. In hoping we virtually seek to take our destiny into our own hands, and thereby bring upon ourselves a flood of fears, and, in the end, disappointment. ' Our miseries are endless, if we stand in fear of all possibilities,' said Seneca. ' Men are disturbed not by things but by the views they take of things,' added Epictetus. And Marcus Aurelius suggests the remedy for these and all other ills of our own making. ' The view taken is everything,' he said; ' and that rests entirely with yourself. Disown the false view, and behold! the headland is rounded, and there is the calm, still water, and the waveless harbor.' And then there is death, the last enemy. Seneca imagines one saying, ' Oh! it is a terrible thing to die.' ' Well,' he replies, ' and is it not better once to suffer it than always to fear it? ' ' Death is nothing terrible,' said Epictetus, ' the terror consists in our notion of death.' This thought was developed by all of the Roman Stoics. ' The length of a man's life adds nothing to its value,' argues Seneca. ' We live one day at a time. He who can say he has lived this day well, has lived long enough to become wise. A man may die old at thirty,' he says, ' another young at fourscore. The latter lives after death, but the former perished before he died. The important thing,' he continues, ' is to die well, for death brings us to immortality. This life is only a prelude to eternity, where we are to expect another original and another state of things.' There can be no doubt that in this new freedom the Stoic tapped the fountain source of spirituality in man. And yet, the ideal is often over-wrought and theatrical, and the suppression of emotion not infrequently led to unfeeling attitude toward others. When the Macedonian king, Demetrius, after he had sacked the city of Megara, asked the philosopher Stilpo what he had lost, Stilpo admitted his house had been burned over his head, his patrimony was gone, his wife and his children had been scattered, he knew not whither, and yet he was serene and unperturbed in spirit. ' I have lost nothing,' he said, ' my justice, my courage, my temperance, and my prudence are still with me.'

It will appear in the foregoing, that in the final stage of Stoicism — the Roman stage — covering the first two centuries of the Christian era, the teaching lost much of its philosophical character, and became more of a popular moral creed, tinged with religious sentiment. Signs of national decay were evident on all sides and reflective minds were turning to Stoicism for moral stimulus and support. Cicero called it a ' medicine of the soul.' It was a day of moral maxims and sententious sayings. ' Disquietude is misery; in composure is happiness,' said Cicero who was one of the chief makers of proverbs. But Seneca was even more prolific: ' The foundation of true joy is in the conscience.' ' A good conscience is the testimony of a good life, and the reward of it.' ' Misfortunes cannot be avoided, but they may be sweetened, if not overcome; our lives may be made happy by philosophy.' And how close to the spirit of Fenelon are his words:

' How beautiful is the custom in the evening of reviewing the whole day! How quiet a sleep follows on self examination.' Seneca was temperamentally timid and introspective, finding little joy in high adventure. ' I am none of those who take delight in tumults, and in struggling with difficulties.' And he speaks scornfully of the abuse and waste of time that attend public affairs. ' I get me home again as fast as I can.' His heart was in his books.

In Marcus Aurelius, the last of the classic Stoic writers, the doctrine reflected the needs of the gentle, high-minded soul who unwaveringly accepted his destiny as emperor of Rome in the face of moral and political decay, but whose heart's allegiance was given to the celestial city in which all men are brothers. It was, indeed, heart-allegiance, for Stoicism's explanation of the universe was never theoretically convincing to Marcus Aurelius. His intellect could not decide between Zeno and Lucretius. ' Things are so wrapped in veils that it has seemed to philosophers, even to Stoic philosophers themselves, that complete certitude with respect to them is unattainable,' he said. But even so, a well-poised character knows his way out of a logical impasse when life's values are at stake. ' If this world is a whirling chaos of atoms, without order or purpose, see to it that your action has rational purpose. If there be a God, well and good; but if blind chance rule the world, do you not also be governed by it.' Any man can at least be master of his own conduct, he held. It is the judgment of history that the real contribution of Marcus Aurelius was Marcus Aurelius himself. The spectacle of his stedfast courage, at once sublime and pathetic, as he faced the impossible task of checking the moral dissolution of the Empire has given him place among the world's moral heroes. For Rome, after nine hundred years, had passed her ' golden age ' and was definitely on the decline.

The hopelessness of the human situation, except as interpreted by Stoicism, is reflected on every page of the ' Meditations,' which Marcus Aurelius wrote for his own admonition and comfort. ' What a small portion of the vast and infinite eternity is it that is allotted unto every one of us, and how soon it vanishes into the general age of the world. And on what a little clod of the whole earth is it that thou dost crawl.' And the record of history adds little to salve our pride. ' Imagine yourself suddenly elevated to some lofty region above the earth and looked down on the race of men, — would you see anything to be proud of? ' But insignificance is not ignominy when one remembers that the dignity of the eternal world-order is his by birthright. ' Reverence that which is best in the universe, and in like manner, reverence that which is best in thyself.' ' If I shall always be mindful that I am a part of the universe, I shall never be displeased with anything that falls to my particular share of the common chances of the world.' And if his submission to cosmic law falls short of exultation, it lacked nothing in completeness. ' Everything harmonizes with me which is harmonious to thee, O Universe. Nothing is for me too early or too late, which is the due time for thee. Everything is fruit to me which thy seasons bring, O nature: from thee are all things, in thee are all things, and to thee all things return.'

The social implications of Stoicism came to fullest consciousness in its later period, when the rather negative and abstract doctrine of Cosmopolitanism took concrete and humanly personal expression. ' God has made the nature of man such that it cannot obtain any good proper to itself, unless it contribute something to the common interest,' said Epictetus. ' No one can live happily who looks only to himself, who turns all things to his own advantage; you must live for others if you would live for yourself,' was Seneca's way of saying it. Marcus Aurelius develops his social philosophy more in detail, ' what is not good for the swarm is not good for the bee.' All living creatures obey the social impulse by nature, he says. We find bees in swarms, cattle in herds, and birds in flocks. And in man this impulse is reinforced by reason. ' Intelligence,' he says, ' in a peculiar manner tends to that which is of the same kin, and joins with it, so that the feeling of community is the inevitable consequence.' And this, he goes on to say, explains the origin of ' political communities and friendships, families and social gatherings,' and he finds in it the origin and authority of social conscience, also. ' I cannot find it in my heart to be angry with any man, for we are all made for mutual help, as are the feet, the hands, and the eyelids. To act against another is contrary to nature.'

But even so, all this led to no social program. The Roman Empire was dying and soon was to crumble away, and the feeling was abroad that the end of the age was near. Nor did it lead to an effort to ameliorate the sufferings of men. There was no thought at that time of the common interests of humanity. The only support the Stoa could offer to stabilize the minds of men in days of darkness and distress was the assurance we were all citizens of the heavenly city and that nothing can happen but by the decree of Providence. Epictetus had reasoned: ' If God and men are akin, there is but one course open to men, never to reply to one who asks his country, " I am an Athenian," or " I am a Corinthian." Why should they not call themselves citizens of the Universe and sons of God? ' And Marcus Aurelius, in almost identical language, makes the thought the essence of his creed. ' As Antoninus, my city and my country is Rome; as a man, the whole world.'

And after death, what? Immortality in some form was held by all Stoics but the conception varied from time to time. All agreed that the substance of the soul is imperishable, being part of God. Further, it was believed by many that the individual soul that lives in harmony with Nature will survive until the great conflagration at the end of the world, while the wicked will perish with the dissolution of the body. But with the later Stoics, especially Marcus Aurelius, confidence in personal survival wavered, their attitude being only one of hope. Life is a voyage of a limited duration, so that when you are reaching your destination, and are coming into the harbor, remember that from the first this was the destined end of your journey. ' Thou hast embarked on the sea of life; ' said Marcus Aurelius, ' thou hast come to shore. And now disembark. If indeed to another life, there will be no want of gods there. But if to a state of unconsciousness, then thou wilt cease to be held by the pains and pleasures of this world.' It was a favorite theme with Marcus Aurelius and he returns to it. Life is a play. ' If in the play you have taken your cue and played your little part, are you to say, — " Oh! but the play is not yet at an end. I have not finished the five acts." Thou sayest well, but in life three acts are the whole play. Go thy way well pleased and be contented, for so is He who dismisses thee.'

And so Stoicism ends. Begun in the spirit of exultation in the freedom of the inner life, conscious of harmonizing with the eternal order, it offered to the individual a city of refuge far above the vicissitudes of the world. But in the deepening stream of life, after seven hundred years, human personality had come to feel that the Stoic offering was not enough. Now, at the close, the spirit of exaltation gave way to a deep sense of melancholy at the futility of life. Expanding life must seek its answers elsewhere.

CHAPTER NINE

THE GREEK'S LAST GUESS — MYSTICISM

Remember that there are parts of what it concerns you most to know which I cannot describe to you; you must come with me and see for yourselves. The vision is for him who will see it.

PLOTINUS

God is the only value. . . . Those who are out for 'feelings,' or for 'great experiences' only wish to have pleasure. That is self-will and nothing else.

MEISTER ECKHART

For seven hundred years philosophy, with the occasional exceptions above noted, had based its endeavors on the assumption that reason plumbed the depths of reality, and gave final answers to all questions of life and of the universe. In that assumption, and in the temperament back of it, rooted what was most characteristic of Hellenic genius and culture. From it sprang the conviction, held in the face of every discouragement, that order and purpose is the law of the world without, as well as of the world within, and furnished the key to the problem of human destiny. It was the source of the optimism, the sheer joy in life and in creative activity which pervaded Greek art and literature, and it lives on in modern thought and life.

But in the end, the limitations of Greek genius had to be reckoned with, and as life grew more difficult, following the Macedonian conquest, and with the influx of new ideas from the religions of the East, it became increasingly difficult to maintain the assumption that all was well below the surface of things. The inveterate intellectualism of the Greek mind still clung to the concept as the measure of reality, but as time wore on, the world of reality of speculative thought became more and more abstract and alien to the busy world of experience. When perplexed and in trouble men began to turn to revelation for assurances that philosophy no longer gave them.

In the third century of the Christian era, Greek philosophy made its last stand in a movement which started in the city of Alexandria in Egypt, but came to its fullest expression in Rome and in Athens. The effort was both pretentious and historically far-reaching, for in it the East joined with the West to meet the religious and philosophical needs of life in the new civilization that was coming into being. The mystical motive had been a real factor in both the Pythagorean and the Platonic philosophies, but it remained for Neoplatonism to make it the basis for a comprehensive view of life and of the world.

Socrates had been led in critical moments by his inner monitor, which was to him the voice of revelation, and Plato, when he felt his dialectic falling short of the mark, fell back on vision, which, he said, each man must attain for himself. The idea of the Good, which holds the secret of life and of the universe, he held to be beyond the reach of discursive thought, being grasped only in a flash of intuitive insight. (In spite of his intellectualism Plato had also the temperament of the metaphysical mystic.) And now in the third century of the Christian era, the disillusioned mind of the Western world was turning to religion for assurances and comfort which the unaided thought of man no longer gave.

The way had been prepared for Neoplatonism by the Jewish Platonism of Philo and by the Christian

Platonism of Clement and Origen — all of Alexandria in Egypt. Alexandria, at the time, was the meeting place of East and West, and the melting pot for ideas of both civilizations. Of Ammonius Saccus we know little, except that he was the teacher of Plotinus and of Origen, and left his mark on both. Hypatia was the one outstanding representative of Neoplatonism at Alexandria, but Plotinus, at Rome, gave it definitive form and place in the history of philosophy.

Neoplatonism was fully conscious that it was both philosophy and religion. It not only attempted to give a comprehensive view of life and the world, but also sought to penetrate to the inmost soul of life and elevate the individual to the plane of the unseen and eternal. As philosophy, it sponsored a type of knowledge free from the restrictions of conceptual thought, and which gave face-to-face experience with reality. A suggestion from Schleiermacher, Christian mystic of the nineteenth century, points the way to the heart of the mystic contention. Thought, he says, is essentially divisive. It sunders and destroys the unity of that which it seeks to know, and offers us the fragments strung together as ideas. The reality which reason seeks to know is a whole and must be apprehended as a whole if it is to be really known. Intuition alone is equal to that task. An earlier mystic put the same thesis in this fashion: The ultimate reality sought by both religion and philosophy, each in its own way, is the Absolute or God, and the understanding of human life and destiny depends on tracing all things back to him. Since the days of Socrates, philosophy has followed the way of conceptual thought in its search for ultimate being, and it has only empty abstractions for its pains. For the logical universal can never be more than the convenient symbol for the reality which is sought. Thus, conceptual thinking draws a veil of symbols between the soul and reality. The more one endeavors to reach the goal by thinking, the denser the cloud of abstractions which obscures the object of his search. In intuitive experience alone, unmediated by symbols, is God, the supreme reality, revealed. And, he adds, in the experience the barrier between the finite and the infinite disappears, reality is transferred to the inner life of the spirit, and the soul comes to rest in God.

And this measures the distance which separates the Hellenistic mood of the third century from the intellectualism of the age of Socrates and his followers. Then, it was held, the logical concept mediates reality, is its measure and guarantee. Awareness is a differentiating function, and the more analytical and discriminating the mental act, the more clear, objective, and coherent is the resulting mental state. The intellectualism of the Hellenic mind rested in the sufficiency of consistent, definable concepts as the final terms of thought and knowledge. The intellectualism of the Hellenistic mood rested in the unanalyzable unity of inner experience. Each believed it held the secret of life and of the universe.

For Plotinus, insight into the world-problem begins with an introspective study of the soul-life. Here, he discovers a principle of unity running through the variety and the multiplicity of experience, binding them into a living whole. This unity is the center of consciousness, and also the center from which all mental activity proceeds, from sensation, the lowest, through memory and imagination, to reason, the highest, each mode of activity discharging some characteristic function in the soul-life. The conscious life of the individual, in consequence of these functions, points in two directions: the objective direction pointing out from the center toward the multiplicity and variety of experience, in which direction lies the sense-world with all its diversity, its meanings and beauty as well as its distractions and discords. There is something tremendously appealing, and also something alien and disturbing in the shifting panorama of the sense-life. The other direction points in toward the center which is the *terminus a quo* of all the activity of soul-life, and the unity which underlies all the manifoldness of experience. From this direction comes the tendency toward consistency and harmony in thought and action, and also the urge to rise above the appeals of sense-life to the tranquillity and peace of the spiritual life. In this direction, also, must be sought the clue to the problem of the good life and the true nature of the world in which we live. Thus, the sense-world and the spiritual world meet in the soul-life of man, actively presenting their claims every moment of conscious life. ' Souls, therefore, are necessarily amphibians,' concluded Plotinus, ' since they alternately live in the spiritual world and in the sense-world, staying longer in the spiritual world when they can remain united to Supreme Intelligence more permanently, or staying longer or more preponderatingly here below when nature or destiny imposes on them a contrary fate.' Because of this dual nature of the soul, the conscious life of man is the scene of conflicting problems and tendencies. It is the place where higher and lower impulses assert themselves, where distinctions of true and untrue, right and wrong, beautiful and ugly arise and impose themselves upon experience. It is where the individual meets the disillusionments of the unstable and precarious mingling with the confident hopes and longings for a reality that cannot fail, and that fully satisfies. Caught in the time-stream of experience amidst change and decay, he feels both the tendency to yield to lower impulse and the self-righting tendency to obey the law of his higher nature and seek the permanent and abiding qualities of the spiritual life.

The spiritual world is the realm of spiritual values. It is Plato's world of 'eternal, timeless Ideas,' having reality but not being; for reality is timeless essence, while being means existence in time. Nevertheless, the spiritual world and the sense-world, while differing as higher and lower, are not separate and unrelated. The attributes and the energies of the higher world permeate the lower world of sense-experience and give it all the meaning and value which make it rational. The soul's earthly task is to make these higher, spiritual qualities dominant in the life here below, and thus to rise to the spiritual level and live timelessly, in so far as the individual's capacity and external circumstances permit. It is at this point that mysticism in the philosophy of Plotinus begins.

The endless quest of the mind and heart of humanity for the Perfect One, who is raised above the infirmities and imperfections of finite existence, becomes also the quest for the complete and self-contained One, who is the source and explanation of all things, but who is dependent on nothing. In Him would be found the ultimate ground of all goodness and truth and beauty. Peoples of all ages, whether dimly feeling after Him, or in fully conscious search, have united to call Him the Absolute One, God. It is philosophy's task, Plotinus held, to open up the way into the presence of the Absolute One, and to show in what way it is possible for man, while here below, to live in union with Him. But the philosopher's task is necessarily a restricted one. 'The teaching leads to the pathway and the journey,' said Plotinus, 'the Vision is the affair of him who would see.' For the philosopher must deal with his problem through the medium of conceptions, if he is to think at all, and conceptions can only point the way the vision is to come. God is obviously inaccessible by all the means known to discursive thought, and yet, Plotinus reasons, if man by searching cannot find God, God, to whom all things are possible, can reveal Himself to man. But it is a revelation that cannot be put into words, or even into terms of thought. It is a sudden illumination of one's whole spiritual being, at once convincing and soul-satisfying, out from which spiritual state one sees all things in a wholly new light. And, if it be asked, in what way is one convinced that this inner illumination is a genuine revelation of the Absolute, the all-sufficient answer is, by the fact of the illumination itself and what it makes clear to the soul. 'We may believe when we have really seen, when a sudden light illumines the soul,' said Plotinus. 'For that which we seek to behold is the Light which gives light, even as we can see the sun only by the light of the sun.' And then he adds: 'And how can this come to us? Strip thyself of everything!' In His light, then, we see light. This, in brief, is the mystic's vision, as interpreted by Plotinus, and the interpretation brings us to the fountain-head of the Neoplatonic conception of life.

God,[1] the Absolute One, is the ground of all being and the source of all meaning and value. His nature is above all the distinctions employed by discursive thought. We think of Him as One, intending to imply by the use of the term the absence of every defect or lack in the divine nature. The term is not to be taken literally, for ' one ' is a term of quantity, and God is Spirit and raised above the unity of mere number. Similarly, in saying His nature is pure essence, it is not intended to affirm the Absolute is a mere blank, impotent and characterless, but that the predicates of finite thought do not apply to Him.

Remembering, then, the merely symbolic function of thought, the essentials of the Neoplatonic cosmology may be summarized in few words. The Absolute One, being above the time-order, knows no movement in the sense of change and becoming, and hence the universe had no beginning in time. Nor has the soul of man. The stream of consciousness is a flow in time, and yet the soul is an eternal and timeless manifestation of the absolute being of the One. The events of the sense-world also are in time, when considered from the point of view of the finite. For the time-predicate is a term of relation peculiar to the soul-life, just as eternity (timelessness) is peculiar to the life of spirit. The soul partakes of the nature of spirit, and derives all life's meaning and value from that fact, but it is not wholly spirit, for the mode of its existence involves differentiations and oppositions, which are breaches of the unity of the spiritual realm. But the soul realizes this inner disunion and the consequent deficiency, and yearns for the healing attributes of the spirit, which will make it like God. Hence, the desire for perfection in man.

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[1] In all strictness, God is not the One, the Absolute, but the revelation of the Absolute One, which has reality but not being. The One is Godhead, rather than God.

As the plane of the soul-life is reached by a descent from the level of the spiritual world, so is the level of nature a descent from the plane of the soul. Nature is the lowest plane of being, in which the spiritual principle is veiled, unconscious, and yet active as the formative, regulative principle of the cosmic order. Each individual thing, plant, animal, inorganic substance, heavenly body, has its own place and function in the cosmos, and thereby receives its right to be recognized as an integral part of the eternal scheme of things. However, the physical universe is not conceived as an embodiment of the world-soul. As Plotinus expressed the relation — the world-soul is not in the world; the world is in the world-soul, taking the intelligible character of a cosmos.

The soul's energies permeate and vitalize the body, but the soul does not, itself, become incarnate in the body. It does not reside in the body, nor does it in any way depend on the body. The soul is the indestructible principle of life and does not perish with the body. But eternal life is the state of the soul, caught up out of the clogging interests of human existence, and raised to the plane of the spiritual world. It is the state of the blessed souls who live Yonder in the presence of God. It is the mystic's privilege to enjoy it here. But in the life Yonder is the soul's individuality preserved, or is it swallowed up in the unity of the Absolute One? Plotinus said: 'All souls have issued from the same principle. All have individual life, and are incorporal and indivisible essences.' Inasmuch as the individuality of each soul is, according to Plotinus, wholly independent of bodily conditions and therefore cannot be affected by the dissolution of the body, it must be an imperishable part of the soul, and remains intact in the life Yonder. But as the very heart of the mystic doctrine is the suppression of the claims of individuality in the interest of the higher claims of spiritual unity, it becomes difficult to see what role individuality could play in the life after death.

On the basis of his metaphysics, the mystic develops his theory of the good life as the apex and culmination of his philosophy. Since unity is the source and the highest characteristic of existence, and separateness the very sign of imperfection and defect, so the merging of human life in material interests means losing one's way in the search for the true path of life and happiness. The *summum bonum* lies in the opposite direction. 'In the midst of the finite to be one with the infinite; to be eternal every moment,' as Schleiermacher put it — this is the goal and the reward of living good and true.

Plato's initial interest in philosophy grew out of his desire to find a way to mend the ills of political life in Athens, and culminated in an elaborate theory of the state as the chief moral institution of humanity. Plotinus, in the face of the moral and political decay of Rome, felt no such urge, and had no place for a theory of state in his system. Political morality has practical importance, of course. But all that the mystic could hope for as reward for practicing the civic virtues would be the lessons of self-subordination, and of the vanity of public opinion. These lessons should be learned as a preliminary to the mystic quest, but the true way of life and of virtue consists not in these, but in being inwardly free through the spiritual elevation of the soul. For that reason Ethics constituted no part of the philosophy of Plotinus.

The first stage of the soul's ascent toward God, as prescribed by Plotinus, was 'purification,' a disentangling of the soul's interests in earthly affairs, and a resolute turning of will and desire toward the source of divine revelation within. The truly happy life is the detached life, the cloistered life, even when one is most active in performing his appointed tasks. Plotinus was an increasingly busy man all his days, often concerned with the burdens of others, yet his was essentially a detached and contemplative life. No social ideal held place in his thought. Marriage and the home were not recognized as spiritually significant. His was the ascetic ideal, and yet it avoided the extreme of making self-denial an end and not a means. [The asceticism of the early Christians who practiced flagellations drew their inspiration from Manichæism, not from Neoplatonism.] It was also an individualistic ideal. Each individual was to find his universe and all the good of life in himself, when under the inspiring control of the spiritual realm above.

Such a view saw in human life no hope of progress, no common task for bettering the conditions of existence. The intellectual life, as conceived by Neoplatonism, had no historical import, and was without social issue. Science, of whose beginnings the Greeks had reason to be proud, had no recognition in Plotinus' scheme of things. All the historic achievements of men, the struggle to master the forces of nature and to build civilizations that would endure, were as nothing compared with the inner vision which illuminates the soul. While the habitual attitude of the mystic is implicitly religious, yet religion in the accepted sense was something external to his thought, and negligible. Plotinus was certainly no friend of the Christians, and yet many of his sayings were such as Paul or John might have written, and there is no doubt that the thought of Plotinus was one of the great influences in shaping the views of the Church Fathers, notably Augustine. Nevertheless, it must not be overlooked that there was a wide difference between the philosophy of Jesus and the philosophy of Plotinus, as Rudolph Eucken clearly points out. He says: ‘ Plotinus finds the spiritualizing of existence in an impersonal intellectual activity; Christianity in an unfolding personal life; in the one, all welfare comes from the power of thought, in the other from purity of heart. . . . With Plotinus, there is an abandonment of the sense-world, exaltation above to eternal things, and repose in a world-embracing vision; in Christianity, eternity enters into temporal things, there is an historical development and a counteraction of the unreason of existence. In the former, man disappears before the infinitude of the universe; in the latter he is made the center of the whole; there, there is the isolation of the thinker upon a pinnacle; here, a close union of individuals in a perfect fellowship of life and suffering.’

The Neoplatonic conception of evil stood out in bold contrast from the Manichæan conception, at that time finding favor in the Roman world. In one point the view of Plotinus was not unlike that of the Stoics. Evil is nothing positive. It is no entity. It is a lesser good, and its so-called evil character simply marks how far short it comes from being absolute goodness. In human life all things are good, but in varying degrees. It is only because of the obscured vision of the unpurged mind that some things are deemed bad. In a divinely ordered world there could be no such thing as 'evil,' *per se;* for the mystic, the struggle with what is called evil becomes merely the process of emancipation from the less perfect, in the soul's passage from darkness to the light of perfect understanding.

And what of the mystic ecstasy? For Plotinus, it was not the emotional state akin to madness, of popular tradition. With him it was essentially an intellectual state when the whole being is alive and actively present in a supreme moment of insight. It was for him pre-eminently a rational state in which all the powers of intelligence unite to maintain a mood receptive to enlightenment. The ecstasy was the great calmness that attended the great light that flooded the soul. Engulfed as in a boundless sea — not, indeed, lost, but with a fathomless sense of being found at rest at the center of the Absolute — such was the beatific vision and such the ecstasy according to Plotinus. Like the Nirvana of Buddha it was a state rarely attained in this life. Porphyry, according to his own statement, experienced it but once, and then toward the close of his long life, and Plotinus experienced it but four times in the seven years Porphyry was with him. Some are naturally more disposed to spiritual things than others, and yet the mystic state may be approximated, in varying degrees, by all who make themselves receptively ready for it, even in the midst of the busy tasks of life.

Such was the Neoplatonic ideal of the 'good life' as proposed by Plotinus, which furnished the model and inspiration for the mystics of the following centuries. Through Augustine, aided by the Platonism of Clement and Origen, it entered into the thought of the Christian

Church, putting dominant stress on the inner life during the Middle Ages, just as Scholasticism stressed the demands of the intellectual life. Down through the centuries until well into modern times, sponsors of the mystic way of life maintained their hold on the hearts and minds of men, sometimes orthodox, stressing the personal and religious aspect, other times heterodox, putting forward the metaphysical aspect in pantheistic form, but all holding fast to the essential of the Neoplatonic thesis.

The mystic's flight into the unknown, and his ineffable visions which, as he claims, reveal to him the true patterns of reality, characterize the speculative type of mysticism, but do not exhaust the significance of the mystical in human experience. Plotinus was a man of pronounced mystical temperament, and in his age the spiritual yearning of men led them to flee the discouragements of a decaying civilization, but an otherworldly mood must be habitual to the mind to which such a philosophy of life could make lasting appeal. The contribution of Plotinus was his discovery of the narrow way of escape for those who could walk in it. But the fertile imagination of the speculative mystic made ontological affirmations that mean little or nothing to the great mass of mankind, whose sober minds move slowly and cautiously. Human beings need a philosophy to live by — something that gives perspective to their thoughts and actions and their scale of values, and that brings a unifying purpose in their lives. Life's claims are scarcely met by seeking a defeatist way of escape. The values of human life are too positive to be obscured by a negative programme. And yet there was something at the heart of the great mystic's philosophy of life which humanity can ill afford to lose. Plotinus was the spokesman for a quality of human nature too little recognized by philosophers — the quality that plays in and out in feeling and imagination, and that we strive in vain to catch and make definite in the forms of articulate thought. It is the quality that is revealed in a supreme moment — one of those instants, rare and indescribable, when in a flash we receive an impression that becomes the inspiration of a lifetime. But the mystical quality has also a more pervasive function, and one that touches the humblest interests of life. Herein lies its significance for the philosophy of life which concerns us all. The fabric of human experience would be a poor, drab affair were there no mystical threads in its pattern.

Speculative mysticism was the Greek's last guess at the riddle of existence. It was a tacit admission that Hellenic confidence in the concept as the instrument for grasping ultimate truth and reality was badly shaken, even though it clung to knowledge (vision) as the measure of life's deepest needs. Plato and the Pythagoreans had anticipated the Neoplatonic thesis centuries earlier. When Plato saw that dialectic failed to grasp what the mind was reaching for, he had qualified his intellectualism by resorting to the myth in order to entertain probabilities that no reasoning could prove, but which suggested final answers to his questions.

The emergence of mysticism as a point of view for interpreting human problems undoubtedly contributed to a fuller appreciation of some aspects of life. But as a working programme for life, sufficient for human needs, it had its manifest limitations. It held out no historic task, no world achievement, no incentive or hope of progress in making a better world. Life and the world as we experience them are not so much explained by mysticism as explained away.

The Western world owes a heavy debt to the creations of Greek genius, but some of its most distinctive characteristics were drawn from another quarter. The source of these characteristics it is now our task to inquire into.

CHAPTER TEN

JESUS AS PHILOSOPHER

Where Mercy, Love, and Pity dwell
There God is dwelling, too.

WILLIAM BLAKE

The spirit is content with the widow's mite and a cup of cold water; it considers the lilies of the field; it can say with literal truth: inasmuch as ye did it unto the least of these, ye did it unto me.

GEORGE SANTAYANA

THE religious mind, with certain notable exceptions, has always been disposed to look upon its sacred writings as something set apart because of the mode of their origin, which gave them their unique status and worth. For the religious mind itself, and for history generally, this has been an unfortunate tendency, inasmuch as every ethical religion has carried at its heart a definite interpretation of life's meaning and value, which could hope to win true appraisal only when left to stand or fall on its intrinsic merits. Little has been contributed to the understanding of Jesus and his message by refusing to consider his philosophy of life on equal terms with the philosophies of life of other great thinkers, and to measure it with the same standards.

The philosophic mind, coming fresh from the consideration of Greek speculations, is halted at the very threshold of the philosophy of Jesus by the absence of all theory. Here is an outlook on life and on the world that is definitely committed to certain basic assumptions concerning the nature of things and the purpose of life, and nowhere does one find a reasoned account of these assumptions, or any attempt to justify them. The metaphysical framework which gives substance and breadth to the sayings of Jesus is assumed to be commonly understood and taken for granted. The outlines of a definite cosmogeny and cosmology are always in the background of his thought, and are referred to, but never discussed. Ethical and social values played definite roles in the foreground, and yet the story ends without formulating an ethics or a social or political philosophy. Notably lacking in the formal characteristics of a system, no philosophy of life has more inner coherence, more far-reaching cosmic implications, or has had more fruitful consequences for human history.

The record of the mental history of Jesus is all but a blank. When he appeared at the age of thirty as the great teacher of his people, he was in complete possession of a philosophy of life which remained unchanged to the end. It appears that he had nothing to communicate until his mind was fully prepared to speak, and when he did speak he gave his hearers the impression of one speaking with authority. The world knows the long and painful quest of Gautama which led to the finding of his Dharma. Confucius himself listed the stages of his own intellectual development. We know that Plato sat for eight years at the feet of Socrates, and afterward travelled and studied abroad until his fortieth year, preparing his message, which saw many changes as his mind expanded. We know, too, that Aristotle's mind awakened early to the facts of nature, which always kept a determining influence in his thought, and that he spent twenty years under the stimulating influence of Plato and his school, getting the spiritual emphasis to the system which he gave to the world. But of Jesus, the record merely mentions that he was morally precocious as a child, and that as he grew up he waxed strong in spirit and in wisdom. The explanation of how the philosophy of Jesus arose and took shape in his mind must be sought in the presuppositions and in the character of the philosophy itself, as presented in his teachings.

The basic assumption of the method of Jesus' message was the conviction that knowledge is not an affair of intellect alone, but of one's whole being. At least in the field of life's meaning and value, which marked the limits within which the thought of Jesus moved, conscience and emotion, instinct and will, along with conceptual thought and imagination, play their distinctive roles in the knowledge function. Knowledge is not a creature of logic but of life. Knowledge is like character: it grows, and it grows from the center out. It grows, not by what is taken into the mind, but what is done with that which is taken in — by what goes out in action. Here was a radical departure from Greek tradition and method. No Greek would have said: If any man *will do,* he *shall know.* It would have been mere foolishness to him. But to Jesus, this view made place for faith as the method of knowledge as well as the method of life. It was the creative principle of mind in every field of human effort, as shall appear later. As metaphysical background of his philosophy of life, another presupposition which gives perspective to all his teaching, Jesus inherited the theistic idealism which furnished the cosmic setting of Hebrew history. These spiritual threads of Hebrew tradition constituted the warp on which he wove the pattern of his conception of life and man's place in the world. It assumed one creative intelligence as the creator and immanent ground of earth and sea and sky, and of all that in them lives and moves. The Hebrew record of the creation is naïve and picturesque, but the conceptual meaning is clear and distinct. It meant that back of all things, and in and through all things, one intelligible purpose runs which gives unity and meaning to life. ' By wisdom the Lord founded the earth; by understanding he established the heavens. . . . For he founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods. . . . He measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with a span, and weighed the mountain with scales and the hills in a balance. . . . He stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in.' The visible universe is thus a challenge to man's intelligence to understand it and use it, and it also furnished the point of approach to man's understanding of the good life.

On this creative purpose, as the Jews understood it, hangs human rights and human destiny. It meant that the Creator has absolute proprietary rights to his creation as the means for carrying out his eternal purpose. ' The Lord made all things for himself. . . . The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof.' Even man, in all strictness, is to be viewed as the Creator's property. ' For we are not our own. . . . It is he who hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.' In view of the Creator's property rights, all immoral acts took on a theological character to the Hebrew mind, and received the special name *sin;* and

Hebrew history became simply the chronicle of a people's successes and failures, judged in the light of divine law.

What was the bearing of these assumptions on the problem of life as Jesus understood it? It was evident, for one thing, that all man's hope for good is rooted in the belief that wisdom and righteousness are somehow bound up with the nature of things. It further was evident that if a people are to prosper and have peace in their time, they must be led by the vision of the inwrought purpose of the Creator. Without this vision the people perish. Hence, for the Hebrew people, the need for seers, prophets, interpreters of the ways of God in a world conceived in wisdom and righteousness. Wisdom comes first, because it is the light that reveals. 'Wisdom is the principal thing. . . . Wisdom is better than rubies. . . . All the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it. . . . He that loveth wisdom loveth his own soul.' This proverbial philosophy reaches its completest expression in a description of wisdom, personified and standing at the city gate, crying out to all who passed in and out, saying: 'The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills, was I brought forth. When he prepared the heavens, I was there; when he set a compass upon the face of the depth. When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth, then was I by him, as one brought with him; I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him. Now, therefore, hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my ways. . . . Whoso findeth me, findeth life, but whoso sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul.' This was indeed poetry; it was philosophy as well; it was of the very essence of the theocratic idea that was the spiritual thread running through all Hebrew history. More significant for our present purpose than all of these, it was the germinal source of the ideal of life on which all the teachings of Jesus turn.

There was a tradition among the more philosophical of the early Church Fathers that the Greek Plato was the forerunner of Jesus in the realm of thought, just as the Jewish John the Baptist was the forerunner in the realm of conduct. This analogy should not be pressed too far. However influential Plato may have been in shaping the thought of the Christian Church, two ideas that were dominant motives in the teaching of Jesus were ideas that the Hellenic mind did not possess, and that it was powerless to produce. One of these was the idea of the unique and intrinsic worth of human personality, and the other was his own conception of righteousness and its primacy in the life of God and of man. Both ideas had their roots in Hebrew tradition and came to their full meaning in the thought of Jesus. Ideas are tools, and take their meaning from the uses to which they are put. Jesus used these ideas to catch and hold a new felt sense of the worth of the human soul, and of ideal possibilities of human conduct. A thousand years earlier, Wisdom had been represented by one of her interpreters as saying: 'All the words of my mouth are righteousness; wickedness is an abomination to my lips. . . . Righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne. . . . All his commandments are righteousness.' All this meant that righteousness was rooted in the nature of things, even in the nature of God himself, and was reflected in all God's dealings with man. It meant that even the stars in their courses fight against the Siseras.

This theocratic tradition, with the religious cult which grew up with it, suffered changes in the long and troubled history of the Hebrew people. The early conception of Jehovah as eternal King, and of his people as subjects of his absolute but righteous authority, gave place later to the idea of God as merciful Lord in covenant relation with his chosen people, in maintaining the standard of righteousness in the life of man. This meant reciprocal obligations, and, in consequence, the moral life and its responsibilities took on deeper meaning, which flowered out in the spiritual messages of the Psalms and of the prophetic writings. But there are seeds of legalism in the very nature of a covenant, and, in time, zeal for the law degenerated into formal devotion to the mint, anise, and cummin of ceremonial observance. After the exile, and down to the appearance of Jesus, the moral values of the theocratic idea faded out before the growing spirit of legalism. Even the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees had become a thing of loathing and contempt. It was mere pretence, and made men hypocrites, who were careful to make clean the cup on the outside, but were willing to leave it foul within.

Jesus met this decadent formalism with his own conception of righteousness and gave it the place of spiritual criterion in his philosophy of life. By righteousness, as Jesus conceived it, he did not mean the narrow and exclusive thing of mere conformity to divine law and pattern. To be righteous meant to be true to every spiritual impulse as the law of life. Righteousness as an inner principle was conceived to be an expansive force, a creative energy working out from the center of one's being, bringing new meaning and new values into one's life. It involved the inner disposition of the individual not only toward his fellows, but also toward the worthy achievements of the past, and the hopes and ideals of the future, for these are among the dearest possessions of the race. It involved the disposition to conserve all ideal values, especially the ideal values that touch on human associations, such as friendship, brotherliness, mutual helpfulness, and love. Righteousness was a most inclusive virtue, as Jesus used the term. Adapting the words of one of the Hebrew poets, it involved ' all that is within us.' Plato had in his own fashion given righteousness an inclusive meaning when he conceived it as being the virtue which attuned the other virtues to each other, thereby bringing harmony and balance into the inner life. But the conception gained in spiritual depth in the summary Jesus made of the whole duty of man. ' Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.' Righteousness, as Jesus conceived it, was the measure of every good thought and act. Nothing escapes its jurisdiction.

The philosophy of Jesus brought for the first time the conception of creativity to bear on the human problem, and pictured man as a co-laborer with God in carrying on the creative work in the world. The Hebrew record had stated that in the beginning God had brought into existence the cosmic order, had made plants and animals, and finally man, and when all was done, he had pronounced his work good. But nowhere does the record say that the creative work was finished. In point of fact it was not finished, nor is it finished, after all the creative labors of man for untold ages. Man was left in the beginning on the animal level to discover by his own unaided efforts his distinctive human quality, and to devise the means for lifting himself to his own level. Let one try to imagine the patient struggle which first gave man a language by which to climb up from the condition of primitive stupidity into the possession of the treasures of articulate thought — the arts and the sciences, the moral and religious ideals through which he sought mastery over himself and over the forces of nature. If one would see the world as it was in the beginning, let him go where swamp-lands and jungles breed disease and pests, where arid deserts and waste places are still untouched by the hand of man. Let him go where there are no cultivated fruits and grains and flowers, no music, no literature, none of the courtesies and refinements of life. And when we consider the man himself, his inner world in which he lives, and must live with the richness or poverty of its resources and furnishings, the spiritual assets of his life, even these are dependent on momentary creative activity for being what they are. Now, this inner life of man is the point of departure for all his enterprises in the greater world without. It determines the nature and scope of all his appreciations, and becomes, therefore, the strategic point in the creative scheme for a richer and a better world. It was to strengthen the individual at this point and give him motive power for his creative task that

Jesus proposed the ideal of the Kingdom of God as the ruling motive of the good life.

Jesus had now reached the lofty eminence from which, in his thought, all the factors of life and the world-situation stood out in clear perspective. He was now ready to unfold his ideal of Life, whose progressive interpretation has been the unfinished task of the Western world almost two thousand years. The term ' Life ' as used by Jesus, like the term ' spiritual,' is not easy to define, and each was used in a special sense to convey a new meaning. Aristotle had used the term ' life ' as the equivalent of ' career.' It meant to him the habitual giving of one's time and energies to some interest or group of interests, and he mentions especially the ' political life,' the ' life of the philosopher,' and the ' life of pleasure.' He thus indicated that one's life may take different directions, may pursue different objectives, and, consequently, it may be drawn into different patterns, as determined by conditions that lie outside of one's self. Jesus had in mind something quite different from a ' career.' A career is something specific, something whose nature is determined by external conditions. He meant by ' Life ' something more intimate and personal, something generic and essential to man as man. He had in mind what has since been known as the ' inner life,' as the seat and source of all true values. There were approximations of this conception by some of the Greek thinkers. Socrates had had his *daimon,* his inner monitor, which gave him an occasional sense of divine guidance, and which, as he told the judges at his trial, he would continue to heed whatever the cost. Plato, too, in a well-remembered connection, made mention of the ' man within a man.' But neither Socrates nor

Plato conceived the possibility of an inner life, autonomous, self-sustaining, and self-refreshing, which had the sanction of God and of man's own nature. It would have occurred to neither of them, in commending his own interpretations of life, to say: The water that I give shall become in you a well of water, springing up into everlasting life. The 'inner life' of Jesus was the life of the spirit in man, that both emancipates and enlightens. The tranquil life of Stoicism came a step nearer to the conception of Jesus, because it involved a definite intent to organize thought and feeling and will in the attitude of loyalty to the Universal Law. But while the Stoic conception, at best, was sublime and inspiring, it was powerless to bring the sense of divine discontent with human conditions, or to stimulate the creative energies of the individual or of society. Stoicism was a city of refuge in a dying world; it could not revive it or create a new one.

The teachings of Jesus were brought to a focus in the ideal of the Kingdom of God, and in his philosophy of life this ideal becomes the key to the solution of the human problem, as a voluntary enterprise. Human life, as he saw it, tends to break down under its own weight, unless its recreative energies are constantly reinforced and directed by some supreme life-motive. Nature is bountiful in many ways, but it supplies no reverences, no loyalties, no ideals to unify life and hold it steadily on its course toward the goal. From the very beginnings of community life, the urgent need that faced mankind has been devotion to some common good strong enough to unite and hold men together in good will and mutual helpfulness. Jesus made the establishing of the Kingdom of God on earth — the voluntary reign of the principle of righteousness in the hearts and lives of men — the master-motive of the good life for the individual, and the cure of the troubles which divide men and nations. The good life does not depend on what a man possesses, but how he uses it, and where it brings him in the end. The crux of the whole matter lies in what kind of internal organization rules the instincts and tendencies in a man. If the Kingdom of God is firmly established in men and is made the determining influence in their lives, it becomes the one hope for the ultimate reign of righteousness in the dealings of men and nations. Unlike Plato and Aristotle, Jesus had no message for society, as such, no theory of state to propose or measure of reform. The individual is the unit of creative force, and every thing of good or ill for society, as well as for himself, will depend on how he builds. If social wrongs are to be righted, if the nations and peoples are to go forward in mutual good will and amity, it will be done by the honest thinking and the unselfish choices of those who are led by the spirit of the Kingdom. Jesus did, indeed, expect the gospel of the Kingdom would be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all the nations, and he made specific arrangements for this to be done. But the success or the failure of the enterprise was left to the individual himself. The field is the world, he said, but the seed is the children of the Kingdom.

Nothing in the sayings of Jesus reveals more clearly the acuteness of his insight into the workings of the human mind than the part he assigns to faith in bringing in the Kingdom. Faith, he saw, was the one effective instrument in the realization of all ideals. Knowledge alone initiates no action, although Socrates thought it did, and his belief was shared by Hellenic thinkers generally. It is true that emotions tend to issue into behavior, but the impulsive acts which they initiate are merely the outer expressions of inner states, and, of themselves, minister to no ideal ends. And belief, even when it represents the possible to be, is powerless to actualize that possibility. Faith alone envisages the possible, and, at the same time, espouses it as a programme of action, becoming thereby the dynamic principle of the ordered life. Thus, whatever the field of thought and effort, faith becomes the method of actualizing things hoped for, the making evident of things not seen. It is the method by which human intelligence brings order and fruitage in its own life, brings under control the forces of nature, and enlists men's energies in the common tasks of human progress. In the mind of Jesus, the act of espousing the ideal of the Kingdom was conceived as a life-choice, investing the ideal of righteousness with authority to give shape and pattern to one's whole being; and by the very nature of faith, this life-choice would be the beginning of a character-transforming process. Therein lay the strategic importance of faith in the philosophy of Jesus. The man of faith was the man in whom the ideal of the Kingdom was a dynamic principle controlling his choices, his thoughts and attitudes, thereby making him a new creature. It will be remembered in this connection that Jesus on one occasion taught his followers to address God in prayer in the words: Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth. Only one thing could have been meant by these words: the re-focusing of the creative energies in the individual on the unfinished task of the Kingdom. It meant to release in him the dynamic of faith to help finish the creation of God's world.

We owe to one of his followers, Timothy, the saying that Jesus had brought life and immortality to light in the gospel. In the sense of conscious existence after death, this statement would not be historically correct, for the belief in immortality in that sense was shared by many peoples before this time. Among the Jews it was a cardinal tenet of the Pharisees' creed, although the Sadducees repudiated it. In Greece as early as the days of Plato, the concept of immortality had been given philosophic consideration, along with the possible grounds for defending its claims to validity. Also, among the older civilizations, the cults of Egypt and of Iran were distinguished by the place they gave to the belief in personal survival. What Timothy had in mind, no doubt, was the measureless possibility of life brought to light in the teachings of Jesus; something that was uppermost in the mind of Jesus, and was repeatedly referred to as 'eternal life,' 'life everlasting,' and was mentioned in the writing of one of his followers as the 'endless life.' From the connection it is always clear that the words did not signify mere duration, or had anything essentially to do with mere continuity of existence. Nor had it reference to what was called the 'world to come.' It signified quality, value, the attaining of the spiritual level that made one 'partaker of the divine nature.' There are many values which reflect merely the passing mood, or are the measure of our temporary needs. Such values are contingent, precarious, incidental. But there are some experiences whose values transcend the limits of temporal estimates. To the spiritually discerning, a life that has achieved imperishable value has eternal life here, and will have it in the life beyond. Plato seems to have been reaching after this thought, but only as it concerned the cognitive faculty, for eternal values to him were truth values. The Stoics, also, sought to approach the eternal from their own angle, but reached only the plane of tranquil obedience to the eternal law of nature.

In the thought of Jesus, the eternal brought a new dimension into life, which gave all its meanings and values an upward reach, and which opened up for man the possibilities of the abundant life. It brought spiritual overtones into life and enriched all its harmonies. It set tasks too great to be spanned by the measure of time. It stressed the common humanity in man, the source of their common hopes and aspirations, and the adequate incentive of their working together for the common good. It led men to respect themselves, and to respect others as themselves. ' The profoundest Greek thinkers,' wrote Eucken, ' viewed the temporal life as a reproduction of eternity; but they knew nothing of an entrance of the eternal into time, a meeting of time and eternity.' And he goes on to add that the presence of the eternal in time not only gave a true history to the individual life, but was, also, what first produced a world-history. It brought to consciousness a realization of the oneness and of the continuity of all human life, and thereby gave human aspirations a timeless significance. It may not be amiss to dwell on this point, for on it depends the import of the philosophy of Jesus for human history. It impelled men to reach back into the past and forward into the future, in order to give adequate perspective to their lives and enduring values to their united labors. It taught the interdependence of all mankind and extended the range of human responsibility accordingly. No one lives unto himself alone, and no one dies unto himself. Indeed, the solidarity of human kind is such that no one prospers or suffers to himself alone.

Jesus made a great contribution to philosophy by introducing the idea of the eternal in time, and by conceiving the possibility of living here and now by the power of an endless life. He gave life its spiritual dimension. It is common observation that the natural impulses in man tend to move in three directions, and that, in consequence, as the mind matures, human life begins to take on a three-dimensional character. Breadth, the first dimension to note, as it is the first to show itself in the mind's unfolding, means the lateral outreach into the world of fact together with the ideas which make these facts intelligible. Breadth means the range of knowledge that gives measure to one's understanding and control of the materials of satisfaction. It was the Greeks who taught us to appreciate and foster the arts and the sciences, and in consequence, life in the Western world has had greater breadth of interest and a completer mastery over the forces of mind and nature than other peoples. They taught us to broaden the baseline of civilization.

Life has a natural tendency, also, to move in a second direction, a tendency which begins to show itself in the instinctive contriving and constructing of plays of childhood and comes to full consciousness in the mature programmes and purposes of mature years. It develops with the discovery of one's capacities and interests, and assumes a dominant role as he comes to the age of responsibility. This is the tendency to act, to control and manage, to build. It gives the forward-reaching dimension to life, which might aptly be termed the dimension of length. ' Life is long if it is full,' wrote Seneca, ' and it is full if we mind its development and realize its capacities.' Time has nothing to do with real length of a man's life: that depends on the enduring values of what he accomplishes within the life-span. Both Plato and Aristotle recognized this teleólogical element in life, but failed to give it full play in their conceptions of life, because will played a minor role in Hellenic thought as compared with intellect. But in the passing of the years, especially among the nations of the West, life has come to lay great store on a man's accomplishing power. It gives him his place in the world; it measures the world's respect for him, and, indeed, his respect for himself.

Then, there is the upward reach of life, a tendency that springs from the depths of one's being under favorable conditions. To those who feel its urge and who give it place, it brings a new dimension into life — the dimension of spirituality. At first, the tendency is little more than a dumb sense that life is more than meat and raiment, more than knowing and achieving and all the satisfactions of finite existence; but to the spiritually mature, it becomes the established habit of mind of seeing all things from the point of view of the eternal, and of bringing one's judgments and conduct into harmony with the view. There is such a thing as living from the point of view of the eternal, which is the essence of spiritual living. Jesus had explained that the one condition for entering the Kingdom of God was to rise to the spiritual plane in thought and life, and called the spiritual achievement the entering into eternal life. There is nothing otherworldly in this conception of the spiritual. It is not even a specifically religious term although the eternal is at the very heart of religion. Plato introduced it into philosophy to signify the unseen and the eternal that brings enduring meaning and value into life, a thought kept alive by idealism down to the present day. So far from restricting the term to the field of religion, philosophers have put the main emphasis on its connoting a true dimension of life. Santayana must have had this in mind when he wrote: ' Pure spiritual life cannot be something compensatory, a compensation for having missed more solid satisfactions: it should be rather the flower of all satisfactions, in which satisfaction becomes free from care, selfless, wholly actual, and in that inward sense, eternal.' And, in the same vein, with his eye on those who would go apart from others and from the busy concerns of life to enjoy the spiritual life as their special vocation, he adds: ' It is the world's business to call down spirit to dwell in it, not the spirit's business to make a world in which to dwell.'

In view of much of the thought and practice of the Christian Church in the intervening years, it is a fair question to ask where Jesus placed the emphasis in his teaching of the spiritual life. Did his philosophy of life sanction the spirit of otherworldliness that retarded human progress for centuries? To those who take their answer from the teachings and practice of Jesus, a fair reading of the record leaves no room for doubt. Asceticism had no place in his conception of life. He came eating and drinking like other men, and he even mingled with publicans and sinners, showing by example that the secret of the truly good life lay not in turning away from human associations, but in picking one's way and in putting the stress on the right values. He had his friends, and visited them in their homes. He accepted hospitality whenever and wherever it was offered. He recognized the authority of the state and the sacredness of marriage, and only sought in all his relations with men to carry his conception of righteousness into their lives. The spiritual life for Jesus was the temporal life of men, here and now, animated by the timeless values of the eternal. It meant the habit of sincerity, of keeping the mind single and the heart open. All the moral teachings of Jesus were imbued with the spirit of tolerance for the one who blundered in his moral estimates and went astray, but there was no measure for his contempt for the one who wilfully misplaced them. Such perversion has its logical outcome in hypocrisy. This was the point involved in the episode of the woman taken in adultery. Her sin was bad enough, but it grew out of unregulated impulse; the self-righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees who condemned her, however, was a deliberate stab at spirituality. Trifling with moral distinctions, especially such trifling as threatens the integrity of the spiritual dimension, means to make light of the most sacred possessions of modern civilization. 'That was not first which is spiritual but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual.' A long time afterward, as we now realize what spiritual values are, and only then through the slow and faithful climbing of aspiring souls. Moreover, spiritual assets are the most precarious and instable of all life's possessions: unlike the works of art and the intellectual achievements of the scholar, spiritual assets endure only as they are kept alive by those who ceaselessly embody them in the way they live and act. Living spiritually may well be the full answer to the upward reaching of man's nature; but like holding one's body erect it is possible only by momentarily overcoming the downward pull of gravitation.

No problem of human experience is older than the problem of evil, and to no one are the issues which the problem raises so poignant and so persistent as to him who believes the foundations of the universe are laid in wisdom and righteousness. It was the one problem that gave Gautama and his message to the world, and it has continued to shape the mind of India to this day. In the great didactic poem, the Book of Job, which was probably the earliest of Hebrew writings, the fact of human suffering, especially on the part of the innocent, furnishes the central issue for discussion. And down through the centuries of Jewish history, the one answer which the pious soul could give to his own misgivings in the face of misery and suffering was to reaffirm his confidence in his Creator in the words of the sacred record, Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?

For Jesus, the theoretical problem of the origin and purpose of evil did not exist. Yet nowhere in history does one find a thinker who acknowledged the facts of evil with greater frankness, or showed a more sensitive appreciation of human suffering. Plato and Aristotle ignored the problem of suffering altogether. Only Gautama faced it as the great problem of life, and let it shape the pattern of all his thinking. But Gautama found no victory *through* suffering. Nirvana was the way of escape only. Jesus made no attempt to square the seamy facts of existence with the goodness and wisdom of God. His attitude was the practical one of showing how one might live above a problem that could not be solved. Indeed, he showed that suffering has its own compensations when met and overcome in the spirit of faith. It took spiritual discernment and well-balanced judgment to understand and use the thought Jesus had in mind without risking the pitfalls of self-inflicted suffering. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. If one could say that he was troubled on every side, yet not distressed; that he was perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted but not forsaken, cast down but not destroyed, he had caught the full thought of Jesus respecting suffering in the world, and the way it was to be overcome by the power of the endless life.

Jesus left his followers no moral code, being content to uncover the inner springs of eternal life, and to point the direction moral conduct should take in the world. His ethical teachings were incidental to his setting forth the nature and the claims of the Kingdom, and they had a homely quality by finding immediate application to daily concerns of his hearers. Especially did he stress the inwardness of moral values. The inner disposition, the motive is the germ of conduct, and moral estimates should begin at this point. In all his teachings this emphasis on the inner or spiritual aspect of the moral life is a distinguishing trait of his moral estimates. It is the intent of the giver that sanctifies the widow's mite and the cup of cold water. It is the intent that gives the spiritual quality to the act. This is what gave the ethical distinctions of Jesus their distinctive mark. It made the moral life more intimate and personal than the Greeks conceived it, who seem to have considered only the end. Even to Aristotle, to whom ethics owed so much, ethics was, in his own words, only a branch of politics, and therefore had a dependent status. It concerned man as a citizen, not as a man. That is why both Plato and Aristotle could defend the common practice of human slavery as just because it was necessary in their economic scheme. Even his injunctions to avoid the pitfalls of sin were extraordinarily simple, although each had its far-reaching implications. Seek ye first the Kingdom; enter in at the strait gate; beware of covetousness; if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out; take heed that ye do not your alms before men to be seen of them; love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you. He left to the imagination the task of unfolding the implications of these injunctions which gave them their force. He knew that those who were spiritually discerning — those who had ears to hear — would hear and understand.

The philosophy of Jesus was the most uncompromising optimism the world has ever known. He presented a life-ideal unique in its simplicity and boldness of outline, but as ethereal as a dream. His programme was a venture of faith; every thing was staked on man's capacity and his willingness to rise to the spiritual plane in thought and act, and to maintain himself there as the settled attitude of his life. The Kingdom of God being adapted to the needs and the capacities of all men of whatever station, it required for its possession no store of knowledge and no special intellectual acumen. It addressed itself solely to the will and the capacity to appreciate higher motives over lower motives. It would be difficult to trace the influence of the thought of Jesus in the culture and in the institutions of the modern world, or to enumerate the untold numbers who have found in his teachings the way of the abundant life. And yet it remains for the future to prove whether the world will find in them the final solution of the problems that divide men and nations. Here, if anywhere, Hegel's dictum holds true: the world's history is the tribunal of the world. Life is an unsparing critic, but it has a way of caring for its own.

The simple narratives of the life and teachings of Jesus soon required the work of interpreters for the task of seeking out the unifying threads that bound these teachings into a coherent whole. There was practical need of a point of view from which the full import of Jesus' teaching about life should be seen in its unity. The occasion for this demand was, partly, the tendency on the part of some of the proselytes to introduce alien ideas into the Master's teachings, and, partly, the general, spiritual needs of the age which had lost faith in its own spiritual culture. Words and deeds that carried within themselves the promise of a new conception of life and a new civilization could not for long escape the attention of inquiring minds, when the cultural foundations of the ancient world were crumbling. But in all interpretation, the intervention of the interpreter's own personal equation, in his choice of what he deems significant and, under certain circumstances, worthy of special emphasis, inevitably carries the risk of altering the spirit, if not the meaning, of what is interpreted. Upon the hazard of interpretation, the philosophy of Jesus was now to enter.

From the letters of Paul it appears that many of the early Christians were slow to assimilate the spiritual implications of the words of Jesus, thereby giving opportunity for confusion of ideas and practices to endanger the peace and unity of the churches. The adjustments which the Greek converts had to make were chiefly philosophical and moral, for the Greek mind, unlike the Semitic mind, was not deeply religious. For the Jewish proselyte, the matter went deeper. He had to make a complete break with the conventions and traditions of rabbinical Judaism, rooting in the religious heritage of his people, to make room for a purely spiritual approach of man to God. There was real danger of the religion of Jesus becoming simply another sect of Judaism, and not the gospel of grace for all mankind. The emergency set a double task for Paul: to establish once for all the universal character of the religion of Jesus, and to put to an end the authority of Jewish tradition over Christian consciences. But Paul did even more than this. His interests were theological and not philosophical, and as the first great theologian, he cast the thought of Jesus in a theological mold that has dominated the mind of the church to the present day. No doubt the demands of a difficult situation, as well as Paul's mental peculiarities and personal history, were unavoidable factors in shaping Pauline theology. At any rate, in passing from the sayings of Jesus to the writings of Paul, one meets a new emphasis, a change of perspective and a different atmosphere; and, to some, an altered spirit, also. The thought of Paul was not so much an interpretation of the teachings of Jesus in terms of its own principles, as it was a supplementing of the philosophy of these teachings with a philosophy of his own.

Apart from our great debt to Roman civilization, the two main contributions of antiquity which helped to shape the Western Mind were now made. Greece had done her full share in setting our intellectual house in order, in teaching us habits of reflection and the importance of perspective in the business of life, and in showing us ‘how things grow.’ Her contribution was restricted only by the limits of her capacity, but it was ample for the interests of the intellectual life. The contribution of Jesus was of a wholly different sort. Greece had set the stage for the human drama, but failed in the plot to provide a world-goal for human effort, or to furnish an enduring motive for progressive achievement. It is at this point that the philosophic importance of the teachings of Jesus emerges. These teachings concerned the unrealized logic of the human soul and the possibility of realizing this logic in an endless life. Jesus summoned man to live by the power of this endless life, and to respect himself and his fellow man as bearers of this ideal of humanity. He taught that the distinctive quality in man was due to the creative principle of faith, which not only regenerates and refreshes the inner life, but also releases new energies for the conquest of the world outside. This was the first time that philosophy brought the principle of faith to bear on the human problem. It proved to be a distinctive asset to the motives of the good life, and a potent factor in the progress of Western civilization. While its immediate import was intimate and personal, it was inevitable that its influence should be felt in constructive enterprises far beyond the borders of the inner life.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

WHAT AUGUSTINE DID TO THE PHILOSOPHY OF JESUS

Augustine's name stands written in imperishable characters on the leaves of Western history from the days of the great migrations to our own.

HARNACK

In the reign of the emperor Constantius of ancient Rome, about the middle of the fourth century of the Christian era, there was born in the little Algerian city of Thagaste, a boy who was destined to stamp the impress of his powerful personality not only upon his own age, but upon the thought and life of Christian peoples down to the present day. He was, from his youth up, a brilliant intellect, but along with strong logical powers he had equally strong appetites and passions. According to his own account his was a vehement and sensuous disposition. As he grew into manhood, and until his thirty-second year, the story of his life was little more than a record of alternate devotion to intellectual pursuits and sensual indulgence. Deeply disturbed over the inner contradictions of his moral life, and his growing need for intellectual certainty, he went from one philosophy to another, vainly seeking the final answers to his life-problems. The consolation which he derived from philosophy, he afterward confessed, was no better than a vision of the promised land from the summit of a distant hill-top. Finally, at Milan, he found his answer in the Christian faith, as expounded in the Pauline

Epistles. He became a profoundly altered man. And if ever a man made war on the sins of the flesh, and humanism as a theory of life, it was this erstwhile Roman profligate, Aurelius Augustine, afterward Bishop of Hippo.

Born about the same time as Augustine, there lived in far-off Britain a youth of radically different temperament, and of equally different personal history. All the records we have of the man — unfortunately, they are few and meagre — portray him as mild mannered and gentle by nature, clean and free from the vices of the age. The fires of passion seem to have burned low in him, while the spirit of conciliation and good-will made him a singularly persuasive leader among men. He felt in himself the power and dignity of human nature, and found it easy to believe that others were equally motivated by their better impulses. To him, Pelagius, the message of Jesus came as the most natural and welcome interpretation of life. It seemed strange that anyone would hesitate to accept it as the complete answer to life's deepest needs and desires, for it carried within itself the ideals of humanity for all time. And, just as Augustine had done, Pelagius made the supreme object of his life the exposition and the defence of the philosophy of Jesus.

These two men met — Pelagius and Augustine. They met at Carthage, each intent on furthering the interest nearest his heart. And the mutual understanding of each other's views which followed this meeting ended in a clash of opinion which involved their deepest convictions. For each man interpreted the Christian religion from the point of view of his own temperament and his own personal history, and thereby each gave his interpretation the color of his own personal equation. Augustine, remembering the years of self-indulgence and troubled conscience, could see the Christian Gospel in no other light than a supernatural intervention for the recovery of a lost world, and for the regeneration of the souls of men spiritually dead as the consequence of sin. To grasp his thought in all its implications, Augustine required a theory — a conception of God and his creation, of man and his sin and degradation, of the atonement for sin and redemption of man, and, finally, of man's restoration and of God's programme for mankind on earth and throughout eternity. There was a mystical strain in Augustine which comes out in his interpretations of the heart's longings for the unseen and eternal, and of the contemplative way of satisfying these longings. But the ruling trait of his mind was intellectualistic. Not only what must be thought of the nature of man and the meaning of life, but what must be believed about religion, concerning the nature and the purposes of God, are capable of receiving definitive expression in conceptual terms, so that creeds and dogmas might be built upon it, and canons of orthodoxy established.

The mind of Pelagius balked at this attempt to regiment the religious impulses. It ran counter to every fibre of his being, and was belied by the facts of his own religious experience. Religion, for him, issued from the sub-logical part of his inner life, and there its final authority rested. To him, Augustine's dogma of the Atonement, based on the assumption of man's total depravity, was not only absurd, but was a cruel libel on human nature as he, Pelagius, knew it. The sins of youth arise from inexperience, not from moral impotence. Character and virtue wait upon experience, and come by learning self-control. It is a good world, but man comes into it with undeveloped powers capable of appreciating and using his heritage. What he requires is not a change of nature, a moral and spiritual resurrection, but a carefully selected nurture which will reveal the steps from ignorance to knowledge, and develop the latent powers of will and right living.

The moral, as well as the theological implications of the issue thus raised were too serious to be kept in the background, and the early church was soon drawn into the controversy, first in northern Africa, afterward in Rome, and finally in the cities of Greece and Palestine. For almost twenty years the controversy raged, with varying fortunes, until finally, in 431, the Eastern Church at the Council of Ephesus confirmed the decisions of the African and the Roman Churches, and the Augustinian ideas became the authoritative ideas of the universal Church. But Christian consciousness was not destined to lose the sense of human dignity and power that Pelagius had found in the teachings of Jesus, and from time to time the Church was forced to modify the Augustinian conception of man to meet the demands of life. Nevertheless, by the decision of the Council, the humanistic emphasis in religion and culture were well nigh lost to the Western world until modern times.

The mainspring of Augustine's conception of life was his acute stress on moral duty, strengthened by the New Testament doctrine of sin. His philosophy of life grew naturally out of his experiences before and after his conversion to the Christian religion. Philosophical motives entered into the pattern as paralleling, and therefore as confirming, experiential verities revealed in the

Christian Scriptures, or as offering a convenient intellectual framework for the beliefs deemed essential to Christian living. The assumption of the Augustinian conception was that philosophy, revelation, and experience, rightly interpreted, entered into one consistent and harmonious pattern of meaning which authoritatively reflects for all time the nature of man and God, and the divine purpose here and hereafter.

Three great historic movements helped to fashion the mind of Augustine: Manichæism, Neoplatonism, and Christianity. In his *History of Doctrine,* Harnack has pointed out that all three great religious interpretations of life and the world were in active competition with each other these last decades of the Roman Empire. Each of them, he goes on to say, was the final product of a history that had lasted for over a thousand years, and represented the religious history of peoples from Persia to Italy. Moreover, they were world-religions, carrying ethical and metaphysical implications bearing on the most troublesome problems of life. The most troublesome problem in the life of Augustine was the fact of evil, the insidious influence of our lower nature, its widespread and blighting presence in an otherwise fair and beneficent universe. The Manichæan solution of this problem, which he accepted while yet a student at Carthage, was the first that brought relief to his mind. The Manichæan conception was extraordinarily simple, and most plausibly accounted for the great dualism which runs through the experiences of life. Good and bad, truth and falsehood, beauty and ugliness, light and darkness, life and death, and the rest, are the effects of two creative principles of opposite character, which have been eternally at war with each other, having transferred the scene of their conflict to earth in their struggle over the soul of man. God did not create evil, and he is not responsible for its presence on earth. He is the good principle, and all his creation came from him beautiful and good. Man's faith in the wisdom and the benevolence of God is justified by the order and intelligibility of the universe and by the rational impulses in man, which always tend to move upward. Consequently, the moral life is our recognition of the nature of this cosmic warfare, and of our part in restoring the rightful authority of the divine principle in his creation. And religion takes its place as the natural channel through which the dependent creature seeks to ally himself with the source of light and strength.

For nine years Augustine acknowledged himself a follower of the Manichæan cult, but it must be admitted his profession was scarcely more than nominal, and was weakened by doubts as his mind reflected on his problems. A mind such as his could not long rest in a fundamental metaphysical dualism. During all these years his one source of inspiration and consolation was a book of Cicero, *Hortensius,* on the study of the advantages of philosophy. The work was, he declares, his sole delight, and that ' it spurred him on to love and seek and attain and embrace, not this or that sect, but wisdom itself, wherever it might lie.'

In his thirtieth year, Augustine left Carthage, where he had been a teacher of rhetoric, and opened a school in Rome; here he remained only a few months, when he was appointed to the professorship of rhetoric at Milan, which was, at the time, the seat of the imperial court. But at Milan he met Ambrose, and for Augustine, it was a momentous meeting. For the first time, under the bishop's preaching, the Christian Scriptures assumed philosophical significance. Manichæan ideas fell away, and he took up a receptive attitude toward the Christian religion. But the moral idealism of the philosophy of Jesus escaped his notice, or failed of response in him, and the inspiring conceptions of the Greek thinkers, faint echoes of which he had caught in his early days in the lost work of Cicero, were either unknown to him or misunderstood. He knew nothing of Plato's vision of the unseen and eternal, or of Aristotle's way of attaining the complete and efficient life. Even in the maturer years of his life he still thought Epicurus was a glutton and a sensualist. He was too self-centered to understand or appreciate the thoughts that gave strength and serenity to the life of Marcus Aurelius, even if he knew the work was in existence. There were well-known pagans in Rome at the time, Praetextatus, Symmachus, and others, whose thoughts and lives moved on a plane of high-minded devotion to ideals which answered all the questions that troubled Augustine, but the fact left him incurious and indifferent. Led by no higher motives of conduct than calculating prudence and self-interest, he entered upon the third decade of his life a spiritually unsatisfied man.

In the second year of his residence in Milan, Augustine came upon the means that was to give final answer to his theoretical difficulties, and prepare the way for his acceptance of the Christian religion. These were certain unnamed writings of the Neoplatonists, probably some of the works of Plotinus or Porphyry. He found in them a philosophy ready at hand which completely met, point by point, the speculative issues over which he had for years been brooding. So completely did it meet his theoretical needs that, as basic philosophy, it undergirded all his thought afterward, and helped to shape the dogma that was to rule the Church for centuries to come.

Here was a philosophy which taught that reality is One, that all finite things, both mental and material, are but manifestations of this One, and express in varying degrees the perfection of its nature, and therefore possess varying degrees of reality. The order and coherence which rule the world of thought, as well as the world of things, bespeak the perfect nature of this One, who is God. The world of sense, in which we find ourselves, and which is for many, unfortunately, their only world, is the farthest removed from God, and is for the human spirit the world of illusion and disappointment. Consequently, in seeking to satisfy ourselves with the pleasures of sense we are turning our backs on God, and violating the law of our own nature. Evil has no positive existence, it is no entity. It is a negative affair, marking deficiency in perfection or reality. The degrees of evil indicate the distance of the deficient or evil things from the complete and perfect reality, God. The law of life for man, then, is to be perfect, even as God is perfect. To man alone is given the power to do this, and by the use of this power will his life be judged.

At one stroke the theoretical difficulties which had so long baffled Augustine fell away. Dualism, he realized, is not the last word about the universe. There are no two ultimate beings. And evil is no longer to be feared or to be explained away. Indeed, in God's world, it is conceivable that there should be things of honor and things of dishonor, without impugning the wisdom or the goodness of the Perfect Being. All this is idealism, far above and beyond the materialism of Manichæism. Man is a spirit, and all things, seen aright, speak to him in the language of the spirit.

It was a complete change of mental focus for Augustine, and for the first time the unseen and eternal came within his field of vision. There was now no theoretical obstacle to his acceptance of the Christian faith, which he had habitually waved aside as intellectually impossible. But now it clearly appears (and this is significant for the Augustinian philosophy of life) that his root difficulty had been, from the beginning, one of will and inclination, and only secondarily one of intellect. From his boyhood to the end of his life, he was an apt leader, but a poor follower. Naturally self-assertive, the ego in him was never conquered. He always found himself the center of the picture. Only a confirmed egoist could have written the *Confessions*. Even in his submissiveness he made a good figure and was careful to get the full dramatic effect. With the vanishing of his doubts it was no longer possible for him to hide from himself that his real difficulty lay in his stubborn determination to manage his own life for private ends only. It was a humiliating dilemma which he faced, as he himself confesses: either he must make a complete and unconditional surrender to the divine will and programme of life, or find no peace and rest of soul. In the highly emotional state of mind that follows, Augustine hears a providential voice which he obeys, and opening the Christian Scriptures, his eye falls upon an equally providential passage, which breaks the spell and sets him free.

Shortly after his conversion, and in paving the way for a reconstruction of his life, Augustine makes a decision that was to affect all his later writings. ‘ All men know that two ways lead to knowledge — that of authority and that of reason. For my part I am resolved never to abandon the authority of Christ, for no other carries greater weight.' Henceforth he will be theologian, seeking the ultimate grounds of conviction in revelation, and only secondarily philosopher, heeding the voice of reason when it harmonized with the voice of authority. It was a decision in line with his own mentality, for while he made frequent mention of the years of his 'hopeless quest for truth,' the record reveals that he was not always a careful or accurate thinker, or a trustworthy interpreter, nor could his quest for truth have been active or very intelligently directed. He could have received help and comfort from the writings of Plato and Aristotle that were well known to Roman thinkers since the middle of the second century B.C. And it seems a bit unreasonable to suppose that a troubled mind, that could remember through the years the glow of enthusiasm at reading Cicero's praise of philosophy, should have failed to find enlightenment in the pages of Seneca and Marcus Aurelius in which cultured minds in Rome and Milan still found the wisdom of life. It seems reasonable to conclude, therefore, that Augustine's quest was not so much a quest for truth as for a commanding authority, ultimately found in the words of Paul, which his conscience accepted as the veritable words of God. And that it was Paul, also, to whom he turned for the germinal ideas of his system, rather than to the simple teachings of Jesus, is also characteristic of Augustine, as will appear later.

The key to the Augustinian philosophy of life was the Neoplatonic conception of *perfection,* essentially an æsthetic conception, but given an ethical connotation, and applied to deity. It lies at the center of his system, giving unity and color to all his other ideas and beliefs. God is One — the Supreme and Perfect Being. He is the complete realization of all values — goodness, truth, beauty — which measure all things, but is measured by nothing. His absoluteness, which finite intelligence cannot grasp, may be indicated only by a series of limit-notions, each one representing some trait in his nature. Thus, God is omniscient — his knowledge includes past, present, and future, and extends to all things, great and small. He is omnipresent — his being extending to the outermost bounds of space, and penetrating to the inmost recesses of the human soul. He is omnipotent — he holds all things in the hollow of his hand; nothing is impossible to him. He is eternal — uncreated and everlasting. He is changeless — he is ever the same, without shadow of turning. He is absolute in wisdom, absolute in goodness, absolutely holy.

The cosmos was God's free creation, *ex nihilo,* and as it came from the hand of God it was good, showing the beneficent wisdom and purpose of the Creator. The order of nature and its beauty are no mere emanations of primordial being, but are stamped with the mind of God, and are revelations of his fulness and glory. But law and order are deeper than meets the eye. The whole world-process is caught up in a development whose seed was laid in the creative act. We see only the succession of events, the silent working of forces which produce miracles of life and growth before our eyes.

All this Augustine stedfastly believed on the ground of both authority and reason. But this was not the picture of the world he had known in the years of his quest for truth. The world he had known had been sadly marred. Disease and death, moral and physical ugliness had left sorrow and disappointment on every side. And in his own body, the temple of God, had he not known lust warring with his members? For the third and last time the old problem of evil arose to trouble him.

As long as Augustine was Manichæan, evil was believed to have an independent existence, for which the good principle was in nowise responsible. When his mind turned toward Neoplatonism, evil lost its evil character and became a lower form of good, being seen in the light of its place in the world as a lower phase of the cosmic process. But on the Christian conception of God as absolute in wisdom, power, and goodness, and on the assumption that he is the sole creator and upholder of all things, the presence of evil in the world became a real and inescapable dilemma. To deny the evil character of a bad action, free-will being granted, would mean the denial of the moral life altogether, and this would be social chaos. On the other hand, ' If it were not good that there should be evil, evil would in nowise have been permitted by Omnipotent Goodness.' Another hypothetical answer to the old problem suggests itself to his mind, which is best given in Augustine's own words: ' All things that exist, therefore, seeing that the Creator of them all is supremely good, are themselves good. But because they are not like their Creator supremely and unchangeably good, their good may be diminished and increased.' That is, there is no reason why a perfect being should create a perfect world. ' The cause of evil is the falling away from the unchangeable good, of a being made good but changeable. This is the first evil that befell the immaculate creation — that is, its first falling away of good. Following upon this the habit grew until now, even in opposition to man's will, he has become ignorant of duty, and lusts after what is harmful. And these have brought error and suffering in their train.' And he concludes: ' From these sources of evil, which spring from deficiency rather than from abundance, flows every form of misery that afflicts human nature.' So much for Augustine's conception of the nature of evil, which is a bit of Neoplatonic rationalizing.

The allegory of the Fall, found in Genesis and which he takes literally, now comes to his aid in explaining how the first evil entered our world. When the first parents in the garden turned from the better of two alternatives, and chose the worse, it was an irrational choice, and therefore was evil. It was a violation of good faith with God, therefore it was sin. This voluntary act of perversity entailed inevitable consequences in the divine economy that made repeated disobedience easier, and in the end a deep-rooted habit that held man's original God-given nature in bondage. Created conditionally immortal, man violated the conditions by his deliberate choice, and death became the inevitable consequence. Life on earth, then, becomes a journey toward death, both spiritually and physically, for man in both senses is cut off from the vitalizing energies of God. Down through the ages human beings come into the world with the inborn weaknesses and depravity transmitted to them from their first parents, and to be handed on by them to future generations with increased rather than with diminished force.

Augustine's constructive ideas about life begin at this point. Life has its own preordained meaning and value.

These were woven into the texture of man's created nature, and his whole being is basically set to move in the direction of an eternal purpose. But in the history of man's earthly existence, his original nature has been smothered and violated by unnatural habits and practices, and is now overlaid by a vicious second nature. As a consequence, man has lost the vision of truth, and wanders in ignorance of what is good and right. Nevertheless, the integrity of his original estate is not destroyed. His restless search for happiness; his foreboding of conscience, his consciousness of self-defeat in the midst of self-gratification, all give witness to the submerged nature that is impotent, but cannot die.

How to uncover man's pristine nature and restore its original freshness and potency is the problem of life, for in its solution will follow happiness and every conceivable good. The appeal to philosophy for help in self-restoration is of no avail. Reason, blinded by prejudice is no safe guide to the truth. The hedonist way of life of Epicurus is a defeatist programme, and mocks man's real hopes. Even the Stoic admonition to live in harmony with nature only reminds man of his impotence, for his will is enslaved to evil impulses. He is blind in his perceptions of truth and right, dulled in his appreciation of higher values, and in bondage in his choices and acts. Only in a power outside of himself is there hope of recovery of what he has lost. The philosophy of life, then, becomes, in the last analysis, a philosophy of the plan of salvation from the power of evil in the world through divine intervention.

The scene of action at this point is transferred to the divine plane, and theology takes up the tale. The first disobedience, being a violation of the divine government, had been disastrous for man in two ways: it cut him off from the sustaining spiritual communion with the Creator, and it initiated in human nature a new factor — sin — which grew in power as generation after generation handed on a weakened and corrupt nature. And the misery and despair of man increased as he realized his guilt in the face of God's holy law. For, as Paul said, the law entered that the offence might abound. ' But,' Paul goes on to say, ' where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.' This Pauline conception, ' grace,' becomes for Augustine the pivot on which all his after-thinking turns. In addition to its connotation as ' unmerited favor,' it took on a dynamic quality. As he used it, it meant a certain divine intervention of God in the soul of a man, miraculous to him, by which the shackles of his corrupt nature were loosed, his will was energized, and he steps from bondage into the life of freedom, a new creature. ' He who hath made us, also hath made us anew.' Once more he comes into divine favor, is a son of God, but only on condition that he is ' kept by grace.' The restoration is complete for the favored recipients of ' evervenient grace.' Augustine's philosophy of life is thus a spiritual aristocracy. God, the omnipresent spiritual agency in the universe, is the supreme master of all the forces operating in man and in nature alike. The motive for his agency lies in his nature, and follows the dictates of his wisdom and his goodness. Recognizing that some are saved and others are lost, man can offer no reason for God's discrimination. Man's mind cannot fathom the depths of infinite wisdom. The philosophy of life of Augustine comes in the end to be for the favored few who are foreordained to be saved. Only by this fetch does he save his theological structure.

The *summum bonum* of life for Augustine is the state of blessedness of the restored soul in living unity with God. It is the ideal of the purely inward life, dominated wholly by religious motives. Here the influence of Neoplatonism reasserts itself. Life tends, more and more, to withdraw itself from the work of the world, and to give itself to the adoration of eternal love and holiness (the perfection of God).

In the idea of a perfect enjoyment of God here and in eternal life hereafter, the seeds of monasticism had already been planted in the early Church, but Augustine, more than any other, was responsible for the spread of the cenobitic ideal in the Western world. The Augustinian brotherhood which he founded in his early ministry was the first of those great monastic orders which dominated the religious life of the middle ages.

But the Augustinian mind was too active and aggressive for the merely contemplative life, and the many unsettled problems of the growing church gave abundant exercise for his controversial powers. First came the Donatist schism in the church in Africa, which he was largely instrumental in healing. Then came the doctrinal controversy with Pelagius over the nature of sin and grace. Certain Manichæan conceptions cropping out in the beliefs and practices of Christians kept him constantly on the alert, and finally, in his later years, his whole strength was called forth to combat the Arian heresy, which was the form of Christianity to which the invading Goths and Vandals had been converted. More and more, as he labored and wrote, the conviction grew upon him that the most urgent need of Christianity in his day was a reasoned basis for unity and universality of belief and practice in the Church, for the satisfying of which need he gave his last and greatest work — the *City of God.* As Plato had been led to find the full and complete life of the individual realized only in the larger life of the state, so Augustine completes his philosophy of life by conceiving the individual reaching his full stature as citizen in his conception of the spiritual Kingdom of God. What was this conception?

With the sack of Rome, A.D. 410, the world of human culture and achievement seemed in ruins, and the pagan writers at once traced the cause of the calamity to the neglect of the ancient Roman gods, for which the Christian emperors were responsible. It devolved upon someone to come to the defence of the Church, and prove that the fall of the world-city was due to inherent weakness from many causes long at work, and that only righteousness exalteth a nation and guards it against its foes. Augustine accepts the task and the *Civitas Dei* was the result.

The work was not a systematic presentation of his philosophy of life in its total setting, as one would suppose, but rather a *gatherum omnium* of all his most characteristic ideas loosely connected by one dominant thought. Plato had always believed that his vision of eternal verities reached far beyond the limits of possible thought-formulation, and he expressly disclaimed having given the world the definitive edition of the wisdom of the good life. Nevertheless that did not prevent his conceiving the world of sense as the embodiment and the revelation of divine meanings which illuminated the pathway of life. The general framework of Augustine's conception of the Celestial City suggests the pattern of Plato's thought, but the materials with which he fills out his picture were drawn from the Christian Scriptures. The world we see about us, and the historic events freighted with so much pleasure and misery for mankind, are but temporal portions of an eternal scheme of things, and should be understood in their relation to the whole programme, if they are to be interpreted aright. We must believe, what we cannot see or prove, that behind the veil of time, the universe, unseen and eternal, and its true pattern are revealed to the eye of faith. The City of God, therefore, was not identified with any social institution, whether it be political or ecclesiastical. It was neither state nor church. Nor was it ' Jerusalem the Golden ' of the middle age mystic. It was indeed a reality, but it was spiritual reality, the immanent law of being, that knows no restrictions of time or place. All the forces of truth and righteousness in the history of mankind obey one eternal law and move toward one perfect goal; their reign in the hearts and minds of men and in the institutions of society is indubitable evidence of a government in the world, but not of the world. The ideals we cherish, the intelligible relations we recognize in the world of persons and things about us, are the acknowledgments we find ourselves making of the authority of the divine order in our lives. By such acknowledgments we own that our true allegiance, even in being loyal to our city here below, is really to the eternal city above — the City of God.

The political state, Augustine held, has its place in life, but its value is instrumental and relative only. Social organization, generally, is necessary in human relations. Even the least perfect state, as a social institution, must be in some measure an instrument for good. Things being as they are, even wars may be justified by their results, for God can make even the wrath of man to praise him. But while peace is the aim of the earthly city, as it is the *summum bonum* of life itself, there can be no enduring peace here below. That is reserved for those who enter into the life beyond. Augustine accepts the earthly city — the *civitas terrena* — and pauses in hymning the glories of the beatific vision of the heavenly city to mention some of the beauties of nature. 'What discourse would be adequate to describe the loveliness so manifold and so diversified of sea and land,' he asks, 'the wondrous brightness and abounding fulness of the light, the sun and moon and stars, the colors and perfumes of the flowers, the shadows of the groves, the variety and number of the birds of plumage and the birds of song, the unnumbered kinds of animals, so many and so great, and those tiny forms of bees and ants which are yet more wonderful than the large dimensions of the whales, and that grand spectacle of the sea, changing ever and anon its hue, now green, now a blaze of many colors, now purple and now blue; even in its angry mood how pleasant is its aspect to the eye . . . what shall I say of the many sorts of food and flavors bountifully supplied by nature? What of the many things that help to maintain and to recover health? How grateful is the change of day and night, and the sweet breath of the breezes! Who could count them all?'

But at this point, logic taps him on the shoulder, and admonishes consistency.

It would be disloyal, he is made to feel, to tarry too long on this picture, so he turns quickly to his central theme: 'How much better must be the delights of Yonder realm! How much more beautiful are the golden streets of the Heavenly Jerusalem!' His dominant attitude of mind is otherworldly, world-renouncing. The trail of the serpent is traced on all earthly pleasures.

And what is the place of the Church in life. It, too, is the inevitable social institution in the service of man's spiritual regeneration. It is not, indeed, the *civitas dei,* but only its earthly representative and symbol. The *civitas dei* is not only an ideal but is also an actualizing spiritual reality. As such, the Church is the one institution among men whose sole reason for existence is to stand for this divine rule in the lives of men. But the Church cannot escape the imperfections of all human institutions. We hold the divine grace in earthly vessels. The Church reminded him at times, he said, of a hospital: 'which way ever we go we hear complaining; and into what corner soever we cast our eyes we behold objects of pity and grief.' The life of the Bishop of Hippo was no bed of roses. 'The church on earth is a mere hospital.'

But let us return to Pelagius. The man's character and his views on life and religion won for him a strong following among the clergy at Rome, and sponsors for his doctrine soon arose within the eastern, as well as within the western Church. For more than ten years the controversy raged, prosecuted with unrelenting zeal by Augustine with the aid of Jerome, before Pelagius and his able disciple Coelestius were finally pronounced heretics and driven from the Church, and with that victory Augustine's interpretation of the philosophy of life was espoused by the Christian Church, and was established for centuries to come. From the standpoint of secular history it was an event of utmost significance. For, apart from the value of Augustine's contribution to Church doctrine and polity, the effect of his ideas on the conduct of life, according to philosophical standards, was most unfortunate. For centuries, his conception of ecclesiastical authority was a drag on civilization, and barred the way of millions who sought the way to the good life. On strictly ethical grounds, his ideas about man were more of a liability than an asset. Pelagius no doubt overstressed the exalted character of human nature, but the self-criticism of life in time would have corrected such excessive estimates, and the meaning of life would have gradually unfolded from within. Such a natural development was impossible on the Augustinian basis. The virtue of the good life on that basis was conformity to a fixed norm. He was the apostle of the standardized, the regimented life, and from his day the idea of orthodoxy, and the related idea, heresy, became ruling ideas in the minds of men. The world could well have been spared the centuries of cruelty and death that were demanded in loyalty to these ideas.

Augustine's philosophy of life was philosophical only in form, but not in spirit or intent. It made no attempt to interpret life as it is, to uncover its hidden springs and to release its energies to fulfill what its nature required for a complete life. His work was not philosophical, but apologetic and theological. His mind was emotional and imaginative rather than reflective and critical. He depended in persuasion more on the arts of the rhetorician than the compulsions of logic, and showed in his writing a marked appreciation for dramatic values. He was much less a thinker than a dynamic personality who capitalized his obsessions along with his nobler impulses in marking out the path the Church was to travel in the thousand years and more that followed him. The Christian Revelation was avowed authority for him, but it is significant that he found Paul's words more illuminating than the words of Jesus in tracing the pattern of Christian thought. But, what is probably more significant than all these, his mind never completely freed itself from the influence of Neoplatonic and Manichæan philosophies. It is, of course, unavoidable that the point of view determines the range and pattern of the resulting vision, and the interpreter's personal equation colors his interpretation. But it was no fortunate chance for Christianity and Western civilization that the chief interpreter of the philosophy of Jesus for the church was a man having the mentality of Augustine.

For a thousand years and more thereafter, little that was new in philosophy appeared. Important thinkers there were, of course — a few of them great thinkers — but what they contributed to the interpretation of life were largely elaborations of the thought of Augustine, first in the spirit of Plato and afterward in the spirit of Aristotle. The significance of this mediaeval period for progress in Western culture and life was due to the forces at work that brought in the modern era with its new conceptions of life and of the world.

In the first half of the seventeenth century, covering the life-span of the French thinker, René Descartes, the break with the traditions of the past was so wide as to warrant the laying of foundations for new appraisals of human life and of the world in which we live. It was a period of great intellectual ferment and of the starting of new departures in many fields of investigation and reflection. Descartes was a versatile genius, and he had many cultural appreciations, but he confined his constructive labors chiefly to the fields of science, mathematics, and philosophical method, being content to leave untouched the traditional philosophy of life of his Jesuit upbringing. But his conception of rationalism as the sole method of reaching philosophic certainty, and of mechanism as the explaining principle in science and metaphysics, inevitably led to a systematic interpretation of the life-problem dominated by these new conceptions. Of the Cartesian rationalists, Spinoza, the Portuguese Jew of Amsterdam, was destined to make this venture.

CHAPTER TWELVE

REASON, THE GUIDE OF LIFE — SPINOZA

There is no other philosophy than the philosophy of Spinoza.
LESSING

THE business of philosophy, observed Amiel, is to defend the humanity in man; and some people need this defence more than others. All that Spinoza had to live by was his own philosophy, and history records no one who lived his convictions more consistently, or found in them greater peace and happiness. His system of reasoned belief has been called the one consistent philosophy of modern times, and because of that, it is fitting that he should be recognized as the logical spokesman of those who find their answers to life's questions in terms of reason alone.

Baruch d'Espinoza, or as he called himself after his excommunication, Benedict Spinoza, was born in Amsterdam in 1632 of Jewish parents, whose ancestors had found refuge in the Netherlands from the unrelenting persecution of Ferdinand and Isabella in Spain, and of their daughter the Queen of Portugal. As a lad he was steeped in the traditional culture of these refugees, who sought above all else to preserve and hand down to posterity this last remnant of their people's ancient glory. But, while the boy was pursuing his rabbinical studies in the Jeshivah, his mind was raising theological and philosophical difficulties which the most learned of the rabbis found it hard to meet. Disturbed by the evasions of his teachers, he sought to rationalize his difficulties by the aid of the writings of certain liberal thinkers, among whom were Abraham Ibn Ezra (Browning's Rabbi Ben Ezra), and the twelfth century Jewish philosopher, Moses Maimonides. He soon realized he was not destined to become a defender of his people's faith. The breach in his thought-life was widened when, in his twentieth year, he came under the influence of the free-thinking Dutch physician, Van den Ende, who conducted a private Latin-school at Amsterdam. Up to this time the ghetto, with its severely regimented life, with its rabbinical forms and prescriptions, had been his only world. In Van den Ende's house the atmosphere was scientific and liberal. Here for the first time Spinoza heard of Copernicus, Kepler, and Galileo, of Harvey, Huyghens, Napier, and — more significant for his future development — of Descartes. His studies now took a new direction, and, gradually, all influence of his rabbinical teaching faded out.

In his father's death, which occurred when Spinoza was twenty-two, the last bond of sympathy and understanding which held him to his home and his people was severed, and he stood alone in the world. Four years later, after he had resisted every effort made to induce him to repudiate his new learning, and to return to the authority of the synagogue, he was formally excommunicated and dropped for ever from the family of Israel. This meant complete and final social ostracism from kindred and people of his race. He was a man without a country, because of his race, an outcast from the congregation of his people, for conscience' sake, in an age when man as man counted for little. Constitutionally frail, and now the victim of a wasting disease which was aggravated by the dust from the grinding of lenses, Spinoza faced the problem of fashioning a philosophy that would hold his mind and heart in all the testings of life.

During the difficult years immediately preceding and following his excommunication, Spinoza made friends with certain members of a dissenting body of Christians whose simple piety and abounding tolerance made strong appeal to him. Having no dogmatic standards and no ecclesiastical forms and restrictions, but stressing wholesome living and reverence for God, these Collegiants, as they were called, made a congenial and stimulating environment for the young Jew in the village of Rhijnsburg, near Leyden. In the friendly surroundings of this place Spinoza spent three profitable years, pondering his problem as he polished his lenses, and setting down his reflections as he worked. He then moved on to Vorburg, near the Hague, and finally took up his residence in the Hague, which was his home until his early death in 1677. Later in that year, his friends in Amsterdam gave to the world Spinoza's *Ethica,* in which he summed up in a metaphysical setting his thought about life and its place in the world. As with other works of distinction, its own age disregarded it, and it was wholly forgotten until Lessing and Goethe resurrected it a century later, and gave it the place in the history of philosophy which it now holds.

Spinoza's way of salvation was not easy for him to discover, nor was it an easy one for him to follow. The serene and elevated tone in which he lauds the acceptance of the dictates of reason, and of the blessedness of spiritual freedom, which reaches its highest pitch in the God-intoxicated intuitions which make up the latter part of the *Ethics,* was won by long and patient thinking and much sacrifice. The dream of a home of his own, of wife and children, and of companionship with kindred and friends, must have been strong in him, as it was in every Jew. 'It is the part of the wise man to use the things of this life, and to enjoy them to the full,' he declared, even when he confessed that, for himself, these earthly benefits must of necessity be exceedingly meager. 'Marriage is certainly in harmony with reason, if its motives are worthy,' he thought. Nor was his natural inclination toward the life of the recluse. 'The man who is guided by reason is more free in a state, where he lives under the general system of law, than in solitude, where he is independent.' It was not in a spirit of asceticism, but because his peculiar life-situation was forced upon him, that he sought a new and radical interpretation of life, and a re-scaling of its values. How he was enabled to do that was due to a suggestion that came to him from Descartes.

Spinoza was five years old when Descartes published his essays which brought the decisive break of philosophy with the scholastic authority of the middle ages. From the time when the early Greek thinkers first sought to determine the nature of things down to his own day, argued Descartes, the history of speculation has been a confusion of tongues and conflicting opinions. There has been very little knowledge, and no sure criterion of certainty, in the outcome of more than two thousand years of intellectual toil.

Especially in the field of the higher life-interests, human hopes have gone begging in vain for solid ground on which to build. Each thinker in his turn assumed for his speculations the premise which appealed strongest to him, and then expended all his efforts in deducing correctly the conclusions which followed from these premises. What profit could there be in all this logical performance when the premises had not the warrant of axiomatic propositions? Only one branch of learning that has come down out of the past, he declared, has anything worthy of the name of knowledge; that one branch is the science of mathematics. Its success has been due to the stringent method it employs. It begins with accurate definition of terms, with axioms and definitely formulated propositions requiring proof, and advances, step by step, in its reasoning by direct appeal to logical necessity for each step. Its conclusions, therefore, have all the authority of thought-necessity, carried by this logical chain, up from its self-evident premises. Why has not philosophy followed this method? Where human interests are concerned, the world gropes its way in the wilderness of ignorance and superstition, with only the dubious guesses of its wise men for guidance. Descartes' proposal for philosophy, therefore, is the ideal of a *mathesis universalis:* he would mathematize all the sciences, including the sciences of meanings and values, and bring all speculations to the test of rational certainty. Modern philosophy, on the continent, began in the endeavor to put into effect this Cartesian suggestion, and the result was rationalism.

Before Descartes died in 1650, the new method and the new learning of the French mathematician and philosopher had spread to the chief centers of Europe. Leibniz, a contemporary of Spinoza, who became the first of the long list of modern German philosophers, spent a long summer's day, when a youth of sixteen, earnestly debating with himself the question whether he should go over to Descartes and his mechanistic method, or to hold with Aristotle and the method of teleology. To the youthful Spinoza, under the guidance of Van den Ende, the ideas of Descartes, not only opened a new world to his gaze, but promised to give him his first sure footing for reasoned conviction, now that his Jewish faith had begun to crumble. He saw the possibility of establishing by reason alone, and on the sure foundation of axiomatic truths, the essential principles by which one should live and control his actions, and which, in time of need, would serve as a bulwark against the accidents of fortune. Descartes had, indeed, raised the banner of rationalism and pointed the way the new philosophy should be developed, but he had faltered and stumbled when faced with embarrassing implications of his own mechanistic thesis. It was left to Spinoza to carry through the Cartesian program with unwavering consistency.

What, exactly, was this rationalistic thesis, and what were its implications? In the first place, its psychology was intellectualistic, which means that the intellectual or cognitive functions of the mind are the fundamental ones, and that all of the other functions are only variant forms or derivations from the intellectual ones. Thus feelings and emotions are merely ideas of the lowest orders, whose meanings are so blurred as to be indistinguishable. In the same way, willing is seen to be only a later stage of the knowing function, and therefore brings nothing new into the mental life. In the last analysis, what we call the mind is the endless procession of ideas of varying degrees of clearness and distinctness. In the second place, rationalism held that real knowledge concerned universals only, in contrast with opinion which is satisfied with the mere appearances of things.

This Platonic distinction was a crucial point in the rationalistic theory of knowledge, and it carried with it the metaphysical implication of two spheres or worlds of reality. Not the changing world of appearance, but the unseen and eternal world represented by universals, is the ‘ really real ’ world. Then, in the third place, rationalism held that reason was an independent source of knowledge: that, by intuition, it immediately apprehended certain self-evident truths, from which follow, by the logic of implication, the network of conclusions which determine for us the nature of true reality. This may seem rather complicated, but, in truth, the matter is very simple. For our sense-needs the world as it appears in sensation has its own kind of reality and its own kind of satisfactions. But man as a rational being is not wholly satisfied with life on the sense-plane; he is led to feel that, in some way, his well-being is bound up with what the mediaeval thinkers referred to as the *Unum,* the *Verum,* and the *Bonum,* and in his reflective moments these stand for the true reality. In such moments he turns in thought to the timeless truths and the inner certainties of reason for the defence of life's permanent interests. So much for rationalism and its programme.

Some books are so curiously written that the uninitiated reader would be well advised to begin at the middle and continue to the end before considering what is presented in the earlier chapters. Such a book is Spinoza's *Ethics.* For the beginner, it would be advisable to start with the chapter in which he treats of the origin and nature of the emotions, and the effects of emotions on thought and conduct. The central problem of the book, as is indicated by its title, was the problem of the good life. What is the root-source of human weakness and misery, and of all the failures to read aright the meaning of life? His all-sufficient answer is given in one word — emotions. ' When a man is prey to his emotions, he is not his own master, but lies at the mercy of fortune.' Emotions are the reverberations in consciousness of organic disturbances, and confusion reigns in the mind when they are dominant. Whence come the misunderstanding, the devastating wars, the social savagery, and the host of degrading vices. Emotions are the irresponsible forces in the mental life; they come and they go, and they represent only the impulse of the moment. Spinoza is at great pains to elaborate this point, for the human situation, until the individual has won his freedom, is one of bondage to the emotions. How then is this freedom won?

Spinoza recalls that it was a cardinal belief in the Stoic creed that ' the emotions depend absolutely on our wills, and that we could absolutely govern them.' This was hardly fair to the Stoics, yet it must be admitted that Spinoza's exposition clarified the Stoics' view of the part will played in their theory. Emotions are bound up with organic sensations and ideas of things, and, of course, change as these components change. Emotions are blurred, confused mental states which correspond to bodily conditions, and their control is effected through the medium of clear and distinct ideas. This point is of utmost importance for Spinoza's theory, for it points the way to spiritual freedom which ' gives continuous, supreme, and unending happiness.'

All the sorrows and misfortunes which people bring upon themselves, and upon others, spring from the ideas which find place in their minds and rule their thoughts. Sensuous images excited by physical or bodily conditions rouse disturbing emotions, and false ideas distort the actual situations and give rise to false hopes and fears. Suspicions are fostered by other ideas, prejudices are hardened into creeds and shibboleths, and thus mankind is divided into warring groups, bringing suffering and misery into the lives of all. The injuries that we do to ourselves, and to others, and justify ourselves in the doing; and the petty envies and jealousies; all the bitterness of disappointment and defeat, rise up and give evidence against the ideas that we permit ourselves to entertain, and which in the end come to rule our thinking. Our false ideas are judged by the bitter fruit that they bear. For true ideas not only bring order and harmony in our thinking, but they bring peace and concord into our emotional experiences as well. True ideas furnish the one common meeting ground for all minds, the universal medium for uniting all peoples in mutual understanding and good-will.

Thus far we have spoken of emotions as being determined by ideas, and of conduct as being determined by emotions. To be strictly accurate, said Spinoza, one should think of ideas, emotions, and volitions, not as distinct mental processes, but as phases of one and the same process, the succeeding phases following of necessity the preceding ones. So naturally does one phase follow another that we are unconscious of the inner determinism, and think that we freely think and do this and that. Real freedom, said Spinoza, means absence of compulsion from without. To illustrate and enforce his conception of freedom he appeals to experience. The thought of ill-treatment, he says, issues without a break into an emotion of indignation or anger, and just as spontaneously into those muscular movements appropriate to retaliation. The very word emotion suggests the nature of the process — a motive-tendency completing itself in act. The angry child believes that he freely desires vengeance; the timid child believes that he freely wants to run away; the drunken, the delirious, the garrulous — the illustrations are all Spinoza's — think that what they do and say are of their own free choice, when, in reality, these things are said and done because certain impulses were not restrained. All this is reminiscent of the intellectual determinism of Socrates, and foreshadowed the so-called ideo-motor theory of later psychology.

Although it was long before the day of genetic psychology, Spinoza had a very definite conception of the stages through which the mind passed in the life-history of the individual from infancy to maturity. There are, he said, three kinds of thinking, and three levels of thinking existence. We have, first, imaginative thinking, through the medium of percepts and images; then, intellectual thinking, through the medium of concepts; and, finally, immediate, rational thinking, through the power of intuition. By means of the first, there is given to us the world in which we found ourselves in childhood, and which continues throughout life to be the ever-present, concrete world of endless variety and change. It is a very real world, real in its phenomenal fashion, and where sense leaves off, imagination continues to extend it without limit. Imagination also gives our sense-world, and our lives in relation to it, a past and a future, and makes our tomorrows and our yesterdays almost as real as our todays. Life on this first plane is a succession of challenges through every channel of the senses, and of impulse to respond for the sake of immediate satisfactions.

The second or intellectual type of thinking, arising from inner conditions, follows the order and method prescribed by the nature of the mind itself, and, in consequence, the resulting world-view takes the character of a coherent, intelligible whole. On this plane, the genius of intellect finds expression in the aims and methods of science, which undertakes to reconstruct the world that was fashioned by sense and imagination, and make it into a true cosmos, whose parts have definite relations of necessary connection. Intellect accomplishes this by seeking out the agreements and the differences to be found in the sense-world, and by abstracting the common properties which Spinoza called the essences of things. From these science erects the unpicturable world of reflective thought. This, too, is a very real world — real in its conceptual fashion — but its appeal is to the awakened and developed intelligence of man in his search for reality. The picture language of sense and imagination can only suggest in obscure fashion the reality that is embodied in the physical universe, but the conceptual language of intellect brings it to clear and distinct terms of knowledge. Life on this second plane moves in the clear, dry atmosphere of reflective thought, bringing order and system into the chaos of undisciplined sense-experience.

It is easy to blunder at this point in interpreting Spinoza. His rationalism did not blind him to the appeals of the sense-world. ' A wise man will recruit and refresh himself with temperate meat and pleasant drink, yea, with perfumes, the fair prospect of green fields and woods, apparel, music, sports and exercises, stage-plays and the like, which every man may enjoy without harm to his neighbor.' He was no Stoic, nor was he Epicurean. All things are good or bad according as they are used or abused, as Aristotle had pointed out. But from the point of view of rationalism, there is real tragedy in living on this lower plane, because of the fragmentariness of its experience and the utter futility of its outcome. It is indeed great gain, when, by the power of thought, life rises superior to a mere succession of experiences, and wins for itself a coherent meaning and a sense of relative values; and this is possible without losing zest for the concrete and tangible variety of the sense-world. But the disciplined thinker who is sparing of 'temperate meat and pleasant drink,' in his search for the unseen and eternal, does not lose his reward. The subtle delights of the intellectual world, in tracing the linkage of thought that corresponds to the order and connection of things, more than compensate for the absence of sense-pleasures. How, then, do these two types of thought, and their corresponding worlds, affect the problem of life that grows out of the individual's emotional experience?

'Man's inability to moderate and restrain the emotions I call bondage,' explained Spinoza, but the context reveals he has in mind only what he calls 'passive emotions' or 'passions,' which are mental correlates of bodily disturbances. There are other emotions that give the sense of freedom and of power, emotions which seem to voice the spiritual nature within us. Spinoza called these the 'active emotions,' not only because they spring up spontaneously within the mind, but also because they are the moving forces in personality which impel us to seek truth and reality. They are the uplifting, expansive emotions that bring with them the bracing air of freedom, and reinforce our whole sense of spiritual well-being. Springing from the creative power of the soul itself, they enhance the sense of self-respect, accompanying all our intellectual labors and achievements as coefficients of success. ‘ Self-approval,’ he said, ‘ is in reality the highest object for which we can hope; in contemplation of one’s power of action, and of such things as follow from the power of understanding, the highest possible self-approval arises.’

It is psychology that discovers the way of salvation to Spinoza. The mind escapes from one emotion only by the expulsive power of another emotion, and this control of emotions is effected only indirectly through the ideas which they accompany. Passions which attend the sense-experiences and which enslave us give way before the superior power of the active emotions which attend all our rational experiences. As the man muses the fire burns, and his heart grows hot within him, but the fires of passion die down unless they are constantly fed by fresh ideas. Switching one’s attention from one thought to a less disturbing one is the most effective strategy. ‘ If we remove an emotional disturbance of the spirit from the thought of an external cause, and unite it to other thoughts, then will the love or hatred toward that external cause, and also the vacillations of spirit which arise from these emotions, be destroyed.’ The more direct method is to make the emotion itself the object of attention, concentrating on its purely phenomenal character, and its purely functional role in the mental life. The emotion dissolves and vanishes under such treatment. ‘ An emotion which is a passion ceases to be a passion as soon as we form a clear and distinct idea thereof.’

All this is good psychology, and most effective strategy in the control of the emotional life, but the metaphysical motive underlying it should not be overlooked. Intellect is, in man, the voice of necessity that rules all things, and when it speaks, illusion and all its consequences fade away. There could never be peace and tranquillity in a world ruled by the hazards of chance, or, for that matter, in a world where individuals, as individuals, actually determine their own volitions. In such a world one could never anticipate certainties, but only possibilities, and in consequence his mind would be filled with dread and foreboding. He would never know what to expect. Wherever we accept the undeviating rule of necessity, all sorrows and repinings, all hopes and fears are out of place. We are not angry at the fire that burns us, or the stone that bruises us. We accept the invariable uniformities of nature as the expression of the law of necessity, even when they bring suffering and loss, and are spared the folly of useless regrets. Why not treat the behavior of our fellows, the so-called voluntary acts of will, in the same way as necessary consequences of their antecedents? If we knew the back-lying causes of the prejudices and the misbehavior of others we would see that they had no choice in the matter, but thought and acted under the compulsion of forces as necessary as gravitation. What do we know about the so-called freedom of the will? ' There is in the mind no absolute or free will; but the mind is determined to this or that volition by a cause, which has itself been determined by another cause, this again by another, and so on to infinity. . . . Men think they are free because they are conscious of their volitions and desires, but are ignorant of the causes by which they are led to will and desire, nor do they even dream of them.' How could one prove the will is free, since all proving follows the linkage of necessary connection? No! The belief in the freedom of the will survives by the grace of imagination, that prolific mother of illusions; but freedom from illusions and all their evil consequences comes by the power of intellect, with its clear and distinct ideas. Believe in necessity and you destroy illusion.

Some will think this is a hard saying, and Spinoza was fully aware of the danger. Admitting that, although his arguments leave no room for doubt, he can, however, scarcely expect men to weigh his reasons with an unprejudiced mind unless moved by appeals to experience. These appeals he makes at length, believing that ' the facts show that the mind's decisions are nothing but its impulses which vary with the varying dispositions of the bodily organism.' The inner world of mind and the outer world of physical nature are but two opposite aspects of one all-inclusive system of necessity. It is man's privilege, through the power of intellect, to know this great truth, and to have this truth make him free.

Real and logically satisfying as is life on the second or intellectual level, it is coldly abstract, yielding only the formal, dead unity of system. Such unity meets the demands of conceptual thought, but we miss the warm, concrete sense of life of the first level. Living unity is not in the gift of logic, but of experience only, and to regain this, cleansed of all tincture of sense, the mind must rise to the third level of thinking existence. ' Lastly,' said Spinoza, ' a thing may be known solely through its essence by a third kind of knowledge, which we will call intuition.' Having shown that imaginative thinking reveals things concretely in time and space relations, but leaves experience unorganized and uninterpreted, and that discursive reason or intellect elevates the mental life to the conceptual level, where we see and know things as parts of a cosmic mechanism, and therefore as existing in necessary relations with each other and with the whole, he now gives the culminating step in his exposition of the mental life by showing that the mind completes its function in the act of intuition, which reveals the one Absolute Being, God, as the immanent ground of all order and system in nature and in man, and of all meaning and value in human experience. The act is one of direct, immediate insight, ' without going through any process,' although it may be based on reflection. It is an affirmative type of experience, revelatory in character, and valid in its own right. This is sheer mysticism, of course, but it is the type of mysticism that is the crown and flower of rationalism. ' By the intellect we do not [obviously] mean absolute thought, but only a certain mode of finite thinking, and therefore requiring to be conceived through absolute thought.' It is the essence of rationalism that he has in mind: if life is to have the guidance and sure support of knowledge, then knowledge must rest ultimately on something that is self-evident, and this something is revealed by intuition.

Spinoza's appeal to experience at this point makes clearer his thought about self-evidence in experience. ' Whoever has a true idea, knows at the same time that he has a true idea, and cannot doubt the truth of the thing perceived. . . . No man who has a true idea is unaware that a true idea involves the utmost degree of certitude. . . . To have a true idea signifies nothing else than to know a thing perfectly, or as well as is possible. . . . Even as light makes manifest both itself and darkness, so is truth the measure of itself and of falsity.'

All this bears directly on the problem of life and its highest good. ' It is the highest endeavor of the mind and its highest virtue to know things by the third kind of knowledge. . . . The intellectual love of God, which springs from the third kind of knowledge, is eternal.' To attain to the plane of this love is the crowning triumph of human life. In comparison with it, nothing else matters. The intellectual love of God is not an emotion; it is an attitude of contentment in the contemplation of all the riches of nature and of life conceived as embodiments of the eternal nature of God. Maintaining this attitude, we are able to see all things under a certain form of eternity. We do not despise nor neglect the lower forms of nature or experience, but we do see them in their true perspective, each in its own confused way, giving intimations of God to those who have eyes to see. But this love of God is our ever-present reminder within, that our true citizenship is on the third plane, where alone life's concerns find their true and lasting values.

The intellectual love of God is also the mainspring of the moral life. The essence of morality consists in maintaining a high spiritual morale, that is consistent with man's true nature as a mode of God. Virtue is man's power to be true to himself, in the presence of what would weaken or degrade him. The high-mindedness that springs from the intellectual love of God makes one too proud to be mean, too self-respecting to be base or vulgar, too strong to seek another's injury. The moral life with all the outward expressions that are consistent with virtue will naturally flow from living *sub specie aeternitatis*.

Spinoza was essentially a religious spirit, but religion in the formal, institutional sense had no place in his system. To him, as to Novalis a century later, 'all absolute feeling is religious.' To those who get their religion in definite and set forms, all this would appear hazy and vacuous, seeming to lack the essential quality most vital to religion. It left no room for prayer or worship, and it repudiated the attribute of personality as inconsistent with the absoluteness of God. And yet, Spinoza was implicitly religious in every item of his philosophical creed, and he carried the implications of this creed into every detail of his life. Toward others and their religious views and practices, his tolerance was boundless. Every man has the natural right to be religious in every mode in which his soul aspires, and to touch the Infinite and the Eternal wherever He may be found.

Only by releasing all the spiritual energies of the soul, which are the only available helpers to perfect freedom, are we established in the true way of life. Spinoza admits that the road to this desired goal is long and difficult. The way is too steep for all but a few. It involves the reorganization of one's whole personality around a new center that has little holding power for the great mass of mankind. Reconstruction of a life is a slow and tedious process even under favorable conditions: it means the weeding out of unwarranted beliefs, the revision of uncritical loyalties, and the patient nurture of new ideals and interests. Only stedfast souls bent on great adventure are equal to such a task. 'But,' concludes Spinoza, in summing up his theory of life, 'all things excellent are as difficult as they are rare.'

In this faith Spinoza lived — without a fatherland, without kindred, without the privilege of contact with the people of his own race, without the comforts and the sustaining companionships of home and friends. But he was not lonely. 'The high World-Spirit pervaded him; the Infinite was his beginning and his end; the Universe was his only and his everlasting love,' was Schleiermacher's explanation of his sense of sufficiency. Spinoza himself, in almost the same words, tells us that he was sustained by the inner assurance that 'our salvation, our blessedness, our freedom consist in the constant and eternal love toward God, that is, in God's love toward men.'

Spinoza's thought is admirably sure in touch, clear and noble throughout. But the chimera of a simple and absolute truth, which is the heart and soul of rationalism, pervades his theory of life from beginning to end. The mind of Spinoza was mathematical, and his strength lay in mathematicizing the meanings of things. Language was for him a system of fixed signs, and man and nature were treated as objects possessing such and such fixed properties. The historical everywhere escaped him, and the question of development, with the spiritual interests involved, he ignores as the intrusion of mere imagination in more serious concerns.

Frail from his childhood, and the victim of tuberculosis for the greater part of his life, Spinoza died at the early age of forty-five years, on February the twenty-second, 1677. His body found sanctuary within the walls of the Christian church. On the twenty-sixth day of February, he was buried beneath a marble slab within the chancel of the Nieuwe Kerke in The Hague.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

KANT MAKES ROOM FOR BELIEF — AND ACTION

> *I had, therefore, to remove Knowledge, in order to make room for Belief.*
>
> KANT

KANT'S *Critique of Pure Reason,* which appeared in 1871, brought to a close the first period of modern philosophy, and set new issues for the period which immediately followed. The issues of those first hundred and fifty years had centered round the problem of the nature and the limits of possible knowledge, and while other problems had become involved, the dominant issues of the period continued to be epistemological. On the continent, the rationalist explanation of knowledge prevailed, being upheld first by Descartes in France, then by Spinoza in the Netherlands, and then by Leibniz, the founder of modern philosophy in Germany. Christian Wolf might also be mentioned, although his importance for the history of philosophy was due to his systematic exposition of the Leibnizian type of rationalism, which shaped Kant's thought in his early period. About the same time, a wholly different theory of knowledge was proposed by John Locke in England, and developed by George Berkeley in Ireland, and by the Scotch philosopher, David Hume. The rationalists contended that absolute knowledge was possible when, and only when, it is deduced from rational intuitions, and all else is mere opinion, while the British thinkers, the empiricists, held that there is no absolute knowledge, that all knowledge is relative, and is restricted to the things we perceive. Empiricism and rationalism thus divided the world of philosophy until the critical work of Kant vacated their positions and set the problem of knowledge anew in his transcendental idealism. But Kant did more than this — he opened up a new approach to the whole human problem, which, more than any other, shaped the ideals of life and of culture of the nineteenth century.

Immanuel Kant was born in the Prussian city of Königsberg, on the Baltic, in 1724, where he remained the eighty years of his life in the unbroken quiet of a university town as teacher and thinker. Outwardly, his life was singularly uneventful and colorless, and his intellectual development was the slow, methodical movement of a mind plowing its way through virgin soil, wholly absorbed in the task at hand. There are many traces of this intellectual struggle seen in the stages through which the thoughts embodied in the *Critique of Pure Reason* passed, a fact which accounts for many of the obscurities and contradictions that one meets in this work. It is said that during the years Kant pondered over his problem, he kept the result of his reflections on scraps of paper. Then suddenly, as if in haste, he brought the substance of these notes together in the form of the book as we know it. Smooth-reading books are not made that way.

Upon leaving the university at the age of twenty, Kant spent nine years as family tutor, and then after two years of preparation for university teaching, he entered upon his professional career as instructor in the philosophical faculty. His chief intellectual interests at this time continued to be physics and mathematics, to which he soon added physical geography, astronomy, and anthropology. Readers of the Kantian philosophy should know that, in his pre-critical period, Kant was favorably known as a clear and attractive lecturer, being heard by large classes, and that his books were widely read and appreciated in Germany. Only slowly did logic and metaphysics become leading subjects for his lectures, owing to his lack of sympathy with the prevailing trend of rationalism of his day. At this time Kant had not formally repudiated the Wolfian speculation, but he was an unsparing critic of its empty theories. Along with some of the most active and creative minds of his time, of whom were Lavater, Tieftrunk, Moses Mendelssohn, Lambert, and others, Kant was convinced that the rationalist tradition had run its course. Tieftrunk, speaking of the prevailing metaphysics, declared that 'one could hardly devote himself to it without subjecting himself to the suspicion of engaging in empty speculation.' These men, however, looked hopefully for the appearance of a fruitful and tenable metaphysics. For, as Kant expressed the common conviction: 'the true and lasting well-being of humanity rests on it.'

While yet a student in the university, Kant's physical studies had brought to his attention the *Principia* of Newton, which was soon followed by the works of Locke, Berkeley, and Hume. His examination of these writings revealed that empiricism, as these thinkers presented it, was strong precisely at the point where rationalism was weak: while on the other hand, it was equally evident that empiricism was weak where rationalism was strong. It was a challenging situation to a seminal mind. To resolve the difficulty which sundered these two schools of thought, a way must be discovered by which the partial truth of each side might be so combined that the whole truth might emerge with convincing force and clearness. It is undeniably true, Kant argued, that reality cannot be dug out of the concept, because there is no reality in the concept. It is merely an empty form. That observation was sufficient to stop the rationalist. The real is not the abstract universal, as the scholastic realist had believed, and which the rationalist had affirmed after him. Modern thought was vacating that position for all time. The real which knowledge seeks is concrete and particular, is the ' determined in all its modes ' (to use Spinoza's words, but in a connection he would not have approved) . But these admissions in favor of the empiricist's contention did not blind Kant to the impossibility of generating the ideas of necessary connection from sense-impressions. Without the idea of causality and the other ideas of necessary connection, the fabric of intelligible experience falls apart into meaningless sense-data. And this puts a stop to the empiricist's contention. The physical universe is the union of opposities — Kant had got that far in his physical studies — and now, in his philosophical reflection, he begins to suspect that in the field of speculative thought the same is true, and that the coming metaphysics would be some sort of synthesis that would unite the partial insights of these opposing systems.

Leibniz had already a century earlier attempted such a synthesis, in his own fashion, but the task Kant had in mind had never before been attempted in philosophy. It meant a wholly new approach to the problem of knowledge, a new method and a new terminology. How long Kant pondered the undertaking is not definitely known, but when, in 1766, his essay on *The Dreams of a Ghost-seer explained by Dreams of Metaphysics* appeared, he was well on his way to his critical point of view, and three years later, by his own account, he was already in possession of his transcendental method, and saw the possibility of his 'Copernican revolution' in speculative thought. He gave the world its first glimpse of the coming philosophy the following year, 1770, in his inaugural dissertation, upon finally attaining the rank of professor. It was a significant thesis, betokening his break with the past and the promise of a new system. Descartes' ideal of a *mathesis universalis,* so long the obsession of the rationalistic mind, was cast aside as an idle dream, for mathematical truth and philosophical truth concern two wholly different things. Mathematical truth concerns the fixed relations between imaginary quantities, and being wholly dependent on the manner of our thinking, it is purely formal truth, and subjective. Thus, the reason why the angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles is that the mind cannot construct a triangle (in imagination) whose inner angles do not equal two right angles. Philosophical truth concerns qualitative relations of thought, which have reference to objective conditions that have nothing to do with the manner of one's thinking. Philosophy seeks to know the real, and in knowing the real, the mind is determined, in part, from without.

After the *Inaugural Dissertation* there was another long pause — eleven years. Moses Mendelssohn wrote Kant: 'One sees that this little book is the result of very long meditation, and that it must be viewed as part of a whole system which is peculiar to the author, and of which he is willing at present to exhibit only a few specimens. Even the obscurity of some parts leads the skilful reader to suspect that there is an entire system which is not yet presented to him.' And then he goes on to add: 'In the meanwhile it would be to the advantage of metaphysics, which now, alas! has so degenerated, if you would not withhold too long your present supply of meditations.' But Kant required time to mature his thought. He was still cutting new paths across new ground, fashioning his tools as he advanced. After waiting impatiently four years, Lavater wrote him from Switzerland: 'Are you dead to the world? Why do so many scribble who cannot write, while you who can do it so well do not write? Why are you silent in this new period, and why do you let no whisper be heard? ' Even after these well-meant proddings, it was seven years before the *Critique of Pure Reason* finally appeared. And when it was given to the world, the impression, even among his friends, led some to wish he had meditated longer. For, undeniably, it was, and it continues to be difficult reading. But before the end of the century the Kantian thought had displaced the rationalistic tradition in the German universities, and started new tendencies which, in the nineteenth century, enriched not only the field of philosophy, but the fields of literature and the social sciences as well.

To approach the problem of human life, as Kant approached it in the light of his critical investigations, one must endeavor to follow the logic of his own mind as the problem of knowledge gradually unfolded to him. To do that one must inquire what the mind does in the simple acts of thinking and knowing. Aristotle had made it clear, once for all, that there is no thinking or knowing that is not carried on in the logical form of the judgment, and, further, that truth and falsity are not attributed to subject or predicate notions as such, but to the way the latter are affirmed or negated of the former. But, observes Kant, beyond this point of similarity, thinking and knowing are to be treated as essentially different functions. The movement of thought is analytic, following the linkage of implication, and it never passes beyond the domain of logic in its findings. The movement of knowledge, on the other hand, is synthetic; it carries beyond the limits of the merely conceivable, and completes itself in making contact with the world of actuality. The breakdown of rationalism was due to the inability of its sponsors to see this difference. The rationalist mind went round and round in the conceptual circle, thinking it thereby encompassed reality. The analytic judgment, unfolding the implications of the ideas it already possesses, merely explicates our knowledge, but has no power to amplify it. The synthetic judgment alone increases knowledge by introducing sense-impressions into the structure. Obviously, truth in the case of analytic judgments presents no problem, for here, the predicate is always an implicate of the subject notion. Nor is there any uncertainty as to the truth of any empirical synthetic judgment, such as: ' the sun's heat melts wax and hardens clay,' for the truth of that proposition is established by direct appeal to sense-report. The empiricists were under the impression that all knowledge was mediated by this kind of judgment. But such propositions as ' a straight line is the shortest distance between two points,' ' there are no causeless events ' and the like, are not generalizations from experience of straight lines and of events. No experience could invalidate such judgments as these, for they presuppose experience, and make it possible. Here then, we have a type of judgment whose predicate adds something not implied in the subject-notion, and yet whose truth the mind accepts, and must accept, without depending on sense-report, on the warrant of the mental nature alone. What light does this synthetic a priori judgment throw on the nature and the limits of possible knowledge?

Kant thought it was strange that, for so long, experience should have been taken for granted, as if it were something the mind finds at hand ready made for its purpose. Even philosophers who have always shown interest in the origin of certain experiences never inquired into the conditions underlying and making experiences as such possible. Kant's investigations, so long pursued, made it clear to him that experience of every kind was a mental manufacture. Not that it is wholly a creation of the mind, but, rather, that the mind generates it as a finished product by elaborating certain raw material of the senses with principles of its own furnishing. The process of fabricating experience may be illustrated by the way cloth is woven on the handloom. The long threads, the warp, which run the whole length of the fabric, may be likened to the factors supplied by the mind, and which are common bases for every experience. The threads which cross and recross, weaving over and under the warp, giving body and pattern to the whole, correspond to the impressions of sound, light, taste, smell, touch, and the like. The factors taken together in synthesis make the compact texture of experience having its own quality and meaning. Particular experiences vary according to variation in the empirical factor, the raw material, while the characteristics common to all experiences, and which make them intelligible, are due to the components supplied by the mind itself.

Kant discovered that this genetic process was completed in three stages and on three levels. On the first and lowest level, the incoming flood of sensations is met by two synthetic or transcendental principles. One of these principles gives the sensations a one-dimensional time arrangement, so that they become a sense-continuum or series of sensations. The other principle adds a three-dimensional arrangement and as a result the sensations acquire visual and tactual extension in space. This is all the mind accomplishes on this first level, the result at this stage, called by him ‘ empirical intuition,’ being merely temporalized and spacialized sensations, having mental existence only, and meaning nothing whatever.

The product of this first level then moves to the next higher level, becoming thereby the material for the second stage of the process. It is here met by the twelve synthetic principles of this level, called categories by Kant following Aristotle’s terminology. By the operation of the categories, the mind invests this material with twelve kinds of meaning, thereby constituting them intelligible objects for thought and knowledge. These categories are also the bases for the twelve kinds of judgment known to logic. The mental images or intuitions furnished by the first stage have now become conceptualized on this second level, and, because of this, they have objective reference to things in the external world. All that the mind can conceivably think or know about the physical universe enters into the texture of experience at this stage, by the constitutive functioning of these categories. And because this is the only known function of the categories, Kant believed they determined the bounds of human knowledge. Thus, in this process, the mind gives law to nature, to use Kant's phrase, and, at the same time, it sets limits to its own possible knowing.

But the genetic process has a third stage. The completed product of the second level, called 'phenomena' by Kant, now passes to the final level. Here it is met by three synthetic principles — three principles of unity. They add nothing to the making of the objects of experience, but they integrate these objects into wholes or systems. The deepest law of the human mind Kant discovered to be the law of unity. All the products of the mind's thought and knowledge are under the jurisdiction of this law, and tend, spontaneously, to conform to it. This is why consistency in thought is everywhere recognized as the formal or negative criterion of truth, and why knowledge is never complete until it is systematized, has become science. The first of these principles of unity brings the phenomena of the outer world into systematic unity, and thereby we have a universe, a cosmos. Similarly, the second principle of unity brings all the objects of inner experience into the coherent pattern of a conscious self, and the individual mind is the result. Then, the inner world of selfhood and the physical universe, standing over against each other in our thought, are transcended through the functioning of the third principle of unity, which gives rise to the idea of one ultimate being, God. But, Kant points out, although these three principles of unity do invaluable service in organizing experience, they do not add to our knowledge. They do not bring ultimate reality within our reach. It is true, they give rise to the ideas of soul, world, and God, but these ideas, as far as the faculty of knowledge is concerned, have for experience a regulative function only, and have no objective status whatever.

This genetic explanation of the knowing function suggests some interesting asides that are worth noticing in passing. Were there no sensory data for these mental principles to elaborate, would their functioning yield any mental outcome? The answer would be, yes, but this outcome would not have the character of knowledge. On the first level, the two principles functioning in the absence of sense-material generate the vague sense of duration and of extension (spacial), the familiar images of space and time with which mathematical science builds its numerical and geometrical structures. To Kant's mind, this explained why, in mathematics, the science of pure quantities, every step in demonstration is attended by the feeling of thought-necessity. It is because, in mathematics, the mental nature alone prescribes the conditions for the reasoning and the conclusions which follow. And the reason why, in applied mathematics, we are warranted in extending these reasonings and conclusions to phenomena in the outer world is that these phenomena, as explained above, carry their relational characteristics of time and space in their structure. On the second level, the categories, as constitutive principles of synthesis, may also function in the absence of any material, and as the mental outcome we have the concepts of substance, cause, quality, quantity, and the like. Thus far, Kant's investigations were held strictly within the limits of the three questions he asked himself: what is the nature of knowledge, how is knowledge possible, and what are the limits of possible knowing? If his conclusions are to stand, and if knowledge alone affords the only criteria of validity, then the certainties of life are fewer than man has always hoped and believed. Knowledge gives no sanction to the universal assumption of freedom of choice. It furnishes no evidence of the reality of a permanent self, or of God, and, of course, no warrant for the belief in immortality, for the mind lacks intuition of realities that transcend sense-experience. Finally, it is silent on matters of right and wrong. All such interests must find their justification outside the jurisdiction of the knowing faculty.

Kant had pondered the moral problem long before he broke with rationalism, and as early as 1766 (fifteen years before the appearance of the *Critique of Pure Reason*), he saw that a new way must be found to establish the authority of the moral life. The first Critique was one step in the new way and the next step brought Kant to the pinnacle of his system in the second Critique, the *Critique of Practical Reason.* The essence of morality lies in the distinction between duty and inclination, which everyone makes. Everyone knows that inclination is a personal and private affair, and that actions based on inclination aim no higher than considerations of prudence. Most of the decisions that crowd one's waking hours are of this sort, being concerned with possible consequences that have bearing on personal advantage. Duty is different. It is the supreme category of the practical life, and stems from the nature of the soul itself. Duty concerns what ought to be, not what is desirable or advantageous. Duty is by nature a mandate to the will, or, rather, to the agent as willing, to be obeyed regardless of consequences. Now to Kant, the essence of morality is just this imperativeness of duty, is its absolute right to command. And this authority rests on conditions that are above and beyond the calculations of profit and loss. Consequences are, indeed, highly important factors in one's life. Both in thought and in conduct one must feel his way by taking heed of every possible outcome. But consequences do not give law or sanction to the moral ideal, and they are powerless to generate the sense of ought.

In the conduct of life, the individual finds himself confronted by two types of imperative demands. One of these imperatives merely prescribes the conditions necessary for the realization of certain ends, and were called by Kant hypothetical imperatives. If you are to catch your train you must start at once; if you want to grow strong you must take adequate exercise; if you would be deemed honorable, keep faith with others. One may care for none of these things, but should he care, here are the conditions for their realization. The other type, called by Kant the categorical imperative, admits of no condition or exception. It is the imperative of duty. It prescribes no particular act or end; rather, it prescribes the universal principle or maxim to be followed in willing any act or end. Putting its mandate into words, Kant interprets the categorical imperative as saying: ' Act only on that maxim whereby thou canst at the same time will that it should become a universal law of conduct.' That would be fair to everyone and binding on all. By killing wrong motives and ends at the source, the common good would be sought by all. Of course, each one must apply this principle in each case according to his own best judgment, and here opinions may differ concerning what should be done or left undone. But there is no help for that, for all judgments involve empirical conditions, and are therefore relative to those conditions. But even here, Kant believed, the morally obedient will has its own inner illumination, in the light of which the act, judged in the high court of morality, is kept true to the supreme law of life, which is the ultimate test of moral conduct.

This categorical imperative is the expression and the guarantee of the absolute worth of the rational nature of man whose law it is. It is the mandate of the moral nature itself coming to consciousness in him, demanding that he be true to himself. This means that as a moral being, man can commit no immoral act without violating the integrity of his own being. Keeping the nature of man in view, and its inviolable worth, Kant gives another formulation of the categorical imperative in these words: 'So act as always to regard humanity, whether in thine own person or in that of another, as always an end, never as a means.' The categorical imperative in either formulation must not be regarded as a constant datum of consciousness, but as a principle of the moral life which comes to consciousness only when there is occasion to apply it in concrete experience.

These considerations led Kant to the crowning conception of his ethical system, the conception of human society as a 'Kingdom of Ends.' Every human being, by virtue of his rational nature, is potentially a member of this kingdom. He becomes actually a member by attitude and act of holding true to his nature, which is the measure of his loyalty to the kingdom. Since their social ends are not imposed from without, but constrained from the imperative within, the members are free. Each member in fulfilling his own destiny is contributing to harmonious social living, just as a man enhances the value of his neighbor's property by beautifying his own. In this conception the will, not the intellect, emerges as the supreme function of reason, and this will is free because it is autonomous, because it imposes the law of its nature as the law of its action. ' A will whose maxims necessarily coincide with the laws of autonomy is a holy will, an absolutely good will.' And, for man, the highest good is precisely this good will, as Kant expressly states: ' The only absolutely good thing in this world, or out of it, is a good will.'

Viewed from this point, the life-situation as it appeared to Kant takes definite outline. Man finds himself caught between two worlds, the world of sense and the world of reason, and, by nature, he is akin to both. All that he gets from his sense-world is strained through the tissues of the bodily senses, and takes its appealing qualities therefrom. But with all its concreteness, infinitely varied in form and quality, and with all its power to beguile and thrill, the sense-world would be a mere chaos without law, meaning, or significant outcome, but for certain lawgiving elements borrowed from the world of reason. By virtue of this borrowing, the sense-world becomes to us the intelligible world of beauty and meaning. Colors take artistic forms and tones are brought into relations of melody and harmony. All the values of sense are heightened by this infusion of rational order. The intellectual factors of the world of reason find their true function and purpose in this work of ordering the world of sense, and investing it with values which make it serviceable for thought and action. It is the mark of a balanced intelligence to keep in mind the importance of both factors in making our world what it is to our intelligence. In ordering the conduct of their lives, the sensualists let slip the rational factor from their reckoning, and sink to the animal level, making sense-satisfaction the measure of life's good. Many, on the other hand, have felt the urge to escape the drag of the sense-world, some by ascetic practices, and others by the way of thought, seeking to transcend the limits of sense and find release in the passionless enjoyment of the intellectual life. But the ends of life are not served by seeking to escape from either side of our dual nature. Man's vocation as a thinking and knowing being is to explore his universe, to read its messages in terms of the mind's categories, and to reduce his findings to coherent systems of meaning. He will find that knowledge can rise only in the earthly medium of sense, and therefore it can never hope to transcend this medium. [Kant gives a variant of this thought when he says that it is the downward pull of the cord that keeps the kite in the air.] In this way, man finds that, for intellect, the world is a closed system beyond which knowledge is powerless to go. And yet reality, the ultimate goal of reason's quest, lies beyond.

It is only at this point that the true function of the will-factor of the rational world is understood and appreciated. The universe is an open system to will, the moral law being the open gateway through which reason and reality meet. The categorical imperative is the voice of reality commanding him to act, not as a mere earth-bound creature, but as one who has power to enact divine law into human conduct. *Teneo et teneor.* By the free act of the will man grasps transcendent reality, makes the moral law his own, and is thereby sustained, lifted above the confusions and conflicts of mere earthly existence, and rendered immune to its appeals. Kant was no mystic: he sought no noumenal existence, lost in fathomless depths of reality. To him, reality through the moral law was not a convenient way of escape from life's battles, but a constant, inner assurance that the cause of righteousness was supremely worthy and unfailingly sure of winning in the end. Standing at his post of duty, each member of the kingdom believes that the moral ends for which he fights will win, and is concerned only that his loyal obedience shall be unfailingly stedfast. His business is not to plan the campaign; he cannot judge from what little he sees of the battle-front how the war is going. His business is to make advance on the sector directly before him and have faith in the invincibleness of his cause.

This is, indeed, high doctrine, but is not the total outcome rather thin and meager, and is not the reasoning a bit strained? Has not Kant taken away more than he has given? Some long-cherished beliefs have been completely swept away. The ontological existence of the soul and of a Supreme Being has been shown to be unknown and unknowable. Likewise, it has been made clear that the belief in personal immortality and the belief in freedom of choice is unproved and unprovable. And now, morality is conceived to consist in rigid obedience to an inner law of right without reference to consequences. Grant that this law provides a safe negative guide in conduct, what is its positive value? How does it enable one to know what ought to be done in any concrete situation? Kant's answer to that is that no universal maxim or law that the human mind can frame can do more than give general guidance. The rightness or wrongness of any particular act will depend on a host of circumstances and must be left to one's best judgment to determine. Even then, one's utmost endeavor may not succeed in guarding against error, for one can never hope to foresee the remote consequences of any act. The apparently right act may in the end prove to be the wrong one. Nor may one trust the guidance of feeling in matters of right and wrong, for feelings are intimately personal and unreliable. One can understand the hedonist and the rationalist dissatisfaction with the outcome of the critical philosophy, Kant seems to say, but how can the matter be mended? It is no defect of human nature that both knowledge and feeling are unable to furnish objective standards and guidance that meet the austere demands of the moral life. These demands, being categorical, carry within themselves the marks of their transcendent origin, and therefore the credentials of their indubitable authority over the conduct of man. When the categorical imperative speaks it is as if the voice of God were speaking in us, and it produces in us the conviction that the moral law must be obeyed, and, therefore, that it can be obeyed. 'You can, because you ought,' is the way Kant reasoned about the matter.

There was one common denominator in all of Kant's ideas on life and its permanent interests — the idea that moral value is reality, the supreme desire of the human mind. It was the ruling idea of his mind; all other ideas were directly or indirectly affected by it, assuming their respective places in his ethical system on its authority. Thus, the ideas of the reality of human personality, of life after death, and of the being of God, which were discounted on intellectual grounds, are reinstated and accredited as valid ideas on moral grounds. 'I must obey the moral law on all points. The end is here firmly established, and according to all we know, one only condition is possible under which that end could agree with all other ends, and thus acquire practical validity, namely, the existence of a God and of a future world.' For the integrity of the moral law, and our confidence in this integrity, require that it shall ultimately be vindicated in the obedience of every will, that in the end every knee shall bow; and this ultimate triumph postulates life beyond the grave, and a super-sensible world-order which is grounded in a Supreme Reason — in God. And while happiness can never be the true end of the moral life, it is unthinkable that, in God's moral world-order, happiness does not come to each, according to his deserts.

This gives indication of what religion meant to Kant, for he was profoundly religious in the moral sense. Morality and religion were, to him, one thing with two names. To be moral meant to obey the moral law because it was right, and to be religious meant to obey the moral law because it was the law of God. Prayer and worship, rightly understood, have their proper place in life ' as inducing in us a moral disposition.' . . . They should fan into flame the cinders of morality in the inner recesses of our hearts; they are a means of devotion, which in turn is a practice the object of which is to impress the knowledge of God upon our hearts with a view to action.

Kant's view of the place of religion in life is usually passed over with the briefest mention, and this generally negative, but the matter was not so unimportant to Kant. ' Religion and morality,' he said, ' must go hand in hand, . . . Morality, as such, is ideal, but religion imbues it with vigor, beauty, and reality. It would, indeed, be splendid if all men were righteous and moral, and the thought might induce us to be moral. But ethics tells us we ought to be moral in and for ourselves, no matter whether others are moral or not; it tells us in effect to pursue the ideal of morality apart from any hope of being happy. But this is impossible; and, as without a being to give actuality to the idea, morality would be merely ideal, it follows that there must exist a Being to give vigor and reality to the moral laws, and this being must be holy, benevolent, and righteous. Without such a representation ethics is merely an ideal. It is religion which gives weight to morality: it ought to be its motive. Hence we see that he who has so conducted himself as to be worthy of happiness can hope to be happy because a Being exists who can make him so.'

The makers of the Kant-legend have done what legend-makers usually do: they seize on only those incidents in a life that make a good story, ignoring pertinent features that belong to a true picture. In Kant's case, Heine's humorous sketch comes little short of a caricature. Kant was, it was true, a bachelor, he was methodical in his habits and domestic arrangements, his fragile constitution had enforced on him from his youth a strict regimen, and the self-discipline had doubtless favored his sheltered and unadventurous mode of life. But within these limits he was known as a very human person, interested in people and events, and widely informed of the happenings throughout the world. ' It is astonishing,' wrote Rosenkranz, ' how, without ever having travelled, Kant studied the whole world, and became acquainted with every people, with every class, and with every important city.' And far from being the mere abstruse thinker, shut in to his own reflections, he was hearty and free in his social relations and a notorious lover of good conversation. ' Imagine Kant,' continued

Rosenkranz in his narrative, ' the " beautiful magister," as they called him in the city, in elegant attire, when, his morning lectures being finished, he visited a *Wirtshaus,* took a cup of tea or coffee, and played a game of billiards; picture him to yourself, after this at table, entertaining his companions with humor; and then, after he has worked again, and taken his walk, see him in the evening, as Herder describes him, shining in all classes of society! Would one not believe that I am not speaking of last century, least of all of Kant, but of a philosopher of our own times in Paris? '

Like those of all really great minds, Kant's own established convictions made him more tolerant of others whose beliefs differed sharply from his own. He was in frequent and friendly correspondence with several stimulating thinkers of differing faith, especially in his later years. Of one of these, Moses Mendelssohn, he writes: ' There are only a few so fortunate as to be able to think for themselves and put themselves in the place of others, who, at the same time, can present their thoughts so appropriately. There is but one Mendelssohn. To have here in Königsberg such a man as a permanent and daily companion — one with so gentle a spirit, such good humor, and so clear a head — would give my soul that nourishment of which I am here wholly deprived.' And Mendelssohn, appreciating Kant's tolerance of his criticism, wrote: ' Rare as this trait is among imitators, it is frequently a characteristic of those who think for themselves. He who has himself experienced how difficult it is to find the truth, and to convince himself that it has been found, is always more inclined to be more tolerant towards those who differ from him.' Kant's tolerant spirit was especially evident when one spoke disparagingly of the faith of others. Absence of bigotry, hypocrisy, and fanaticism were the crucial items he looked for, and especially the effect of one's religion on his character and life. No one who is acquainted with Kant's philosophy would accuse him of any leaning toward Pietism and its stress on emotional experiences, which he knew in his boyhood. Having occasion to speak of his father's and mother's piety, and their influence on his life, he said: 'They gave me a training which, from a moral point of view, could not have been better, and for which, at every remembrance of them, I am moved with the most grateful emotions.' And speaking of what their piety did for them he continued: 'Even if the religious views of that day, and the notions of what was called virtue and piety, were not clear and satisfactory, nevertheless the thing itself was found. Let men say what they will of Pietism, those who sincerely adopted it were honorably distinguished. They had the highest that a man can possess — that rest, that cheerfulness, and that inner peace, which no passion could disturb. No need and no persecution disheartened them; no contention could exite them to anger and enmity. In a word, even the mere observer was involuntarily inspired with respect. I still remember how a quarrel about their rights broke out between the guilds of the harness-makers and of the saddlers, from which my father suffered considerably; but in spite of this, even in the conversation in the family this quarrel was mentioned with such forbearance and love towards the opponents, and such firm confidence in Providence, that the thought of it, though I was only a boy then, will never leave me.'

As the last years of his creative labors approached, Kant's mind turned to his third and last Critique — the *Critique of the Power of Judgment.* With the problems of knowledge and of morality out of the way, he was ready to undertake the more genial task of considering the nature of æsthetic values — a matter that had interested him early in his career. But now his mind was growing old, and was too set in the way of metaphysical thinking to advance far into this new and inviting territory. Bosanquet's observation on this venture of Kant was very just: ' The history of thought can show no more dramatic spectacle than that of this great intellectual pioneer beating out his track for forty years in the wilderness of technical philosophy, and bringing his people at last to the entrance upon a new world of free and humanizing culture, which, as far as we can tell, he never thoroughly made his own.' But the fruitful ideas and suggestions which this work brought to light gave impetus to a new stage of the history of æsthetics, and were the main source of inspiration for the æsthetic idealism of Schiller and Schelling. Kant pointed out that the predicates ' beautiful ' and ' sublime ' are implicit value-judgments: they connote a *felt* purposiveness of things in the absence of any conscious end or standard. Consequently our minds invest nature with immanent teleology in the act of perceiving its beauty, and in doing so we look upon it as if it were an organism, having inner unity, and not a mere, dead mechanism. This discovery of the inner connection of æsthetic value, teleology and organized nature, was Kant's contribution to the artistic and literary ferment in Germany which marked the closing years of the eighteenth century. If Kant was not permitted to pass over into the new age with the younger generation, his spirit was one in sympathy with them in their new conceptions of humanity and progress. If we are to give any rational meaning to human history, we must transcend our individualism and take our stand on the assumption that the life of the race is the continuous development of humanity that is moving on to its own implicit goal, and that the welfare of the individual depends on preserving the ideals of mankind. The greatest task of society is the devising of means for living together according to the principles of right reason. Resort to war as a means of adjusting international differences means the abdication of reason. The ideal of organized society should be the maintenance of perpetual peace, and in the maintenance of that ideal the people should have the voice of authority.

Kant closed many old doors and opened more promising ones. If the discovering of fresh problems and of seeing old ones in a new light, and if the opening up of new worlds of thought for others to explore, are signs of greatness, Kant was one of the master minds of history.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

HOW THE TRANSCENDENTALISTS CULTIVATED THE KANTIAN SEED

Three years after the appearance of the *Critique of Pure Reason,* a young man, Johann Gottlieb Fichte by name, made the long pilgrimage to Königsberg afoot, laying before Kant a manuscript, hoping for the master's approval. Some time earlier, the long delayed enthusiasm over Spinoza's *Ethics* had caught Fichte, but could not hold him, and when Kant's critical work fell into his hands, it wrought a complete revolution in his thinking. Kant's conception of the moral law as a summons to realize a spiritual community of free individuals made a deep and lasting appeal to him. So fully did he catch the spirit of Kant's thought, that within four weeks he was able to complete a work in which he developed the critical thesis in the field of religion, which anticipated the main positions of Kant's own work on *Religion Within the Limits of Pure Reason,* which was published a year later. So completely had he assimilated Kant's thought that, when Fichte's book appeared, with the author's name omitted by accident from the title-page, it was received at once as an anonymous work of the master himself.

But Fichte did not long remain a mere interpreter. The leaven of critical philosophy was working in him, and he soon realized that Kant had merely opened the way for a new departure in philosophy. Led by his critical method and his own moral nature, Kant had reached the borders of a new world of thought, but was not destined to pass over and possess the land. That enterprise was reserved for three younger minds of unusual creative powers, the outcome of whose labors constituted transcendentalism's interpretation of life and the universe.

It was the provision in Kant's philosophy for moral aspiration and for loyalty to a supremely worthy end, that fired Fichte's imagination. For Fichte's whole being was organized on the principle that there is nothing truly good but a good will. For the will is the very core of one's being, and life's good depends on keeping this inmost part of us sacred and inviolate. One may say of another that his knowledge is vague or spotted with error, that his reasoning is faulty or his judgment defective, and yet give no serious offence. For it is human to err. One may observe another is lacking in sentiment or has failed to appreciate another's need, or that his sympathy was misplaced, and still keep within the bounds of friendly relations. But let him intimate that the other had deliberately willed the wrong, that his intent was evil, his motive unworthy, and he touches the sensitive spot in the other's self-respect. For the will is the creative source of all that is distinctive in human personality.

But the critical philosophy meant more than this to Fichte. Kant had shown in the first Critique how knowledge comes to a complete stop at the line which sets limits to experience, and that by no intellectual process was it possible to transcend that limit and explore what might lie beyond. But in the second Critique, in which the will is under examination, the situation is different. The will is the one power of the mind that is completely autonomous. It rules everything, but is ruled by nothing but the law of its own nature. Standing, so to speak, at the threshold of consciousness, where this creative will-energy becomes actual in experience, Fichte seeks to discern the method of the psycho-genetic process, by which articulate experience comes into being, in order to understand how life comes to accept the moral law as supreme, and obedience to that law as man's true destiny. Kant would have nothing to do with the venture. So Fichte makes the venture alone, and the first phase of Transcendentalism was the outcome.

Every interpretation is an hypothesis, and every philosophy is an interpretation. In the nature of the case the hypothesis ranges out into the field of the unknown, although it is framed and tested in terms of the known. The hypothesis so conceived did not reach far enough for Fichte's purposes. He proposed that his basic hypothesis should be projected beyond the field of the unknown into the realm of the unknowable, being content if the hypothesis thus conceived should prove to be the best *thinkable* explanation of the origin of human experience and of its varied interests, even if it could never be proved that it was the real explanation. In carrying out such a programme, Fichte accepted, as the most satisfactory hypothesis, the assumption that the phenomenon of consciousness, with all its varied contents, including the representations of physical objects that make up our outer world, is the product of the one ultimate cause in the universe, working in and through the individual mind. On this hypothesis, the world in which each individual lives is his own world, brought into being and sustained in existence through the creative agency of the ultimate being. In which case, it must be further assumed that corresponding worlds exist in the minds of other individuals, as a condition requisite for community of thought and action, and for the common life of mankind. Such a view of life and of the world would be, of course, what is known as subjective idealism. To the objection that this view is bizarre, extravagant, Fichte would answer that the cause of our perceptions is always inferred, never known, and that a spiritual agency is a more plausible inference than dead, inert matter. The British empiricist, Berkeley, who held, on psychological grounds, the same theory of the outer world, was even more specific in the defence of his view. The material object which we see, touch, taste, smell, etc., is an aggregate percept; its reality consists in its being perceived; its permanent, apparently substantial being consists in the invariable constancy in the agency that produces it in consciousness. These percepts, of course, are given to us in space and time relations, and have all the properties which we erroneously attribute to matter. If in addition to these percepts of things there were real material things corresponding to them, we would never become aware of their existence, and if such things, supposing they actually existed, should suddenly disappear, we would be none the wiser. For the only thing we can ever know or use is the thing as it exists for our consciousness. Such a reflection, with all its implications and the consequences which flow from it, could not long remain a mere hypothesis to Fichte. It was, he believed, the conclusion toward which Kant's whole thought was driving, but which he himself was never destined to reach. Fichte saw in it a new and inspiring interpretation of life, as it lay in germ in Kant's transcendental principle, ready to come for the first time to flower.

In philosophy one may start his speculations by considering the nature of things, or he may make the actual experiencing of things — the living flow of conscious experience — the point of departure. Few philosophers have ever taken the life-function as determining the field of philosophy as consistently as Fichte took it. No doubt Kant was a decisive influence in shaping the course of his thought, and the Romantic movement also, but they were effective only because Fichte's whole being was set in the direction his thought was to take. Fichte was through-and-through anti-intellectualistic. Thinking was to him merely a practical affair; it was one form of action. He would understand knowledge from the point of view of life; not life from the point of view of knowledge. The tough-minded thinker, whose speculations are controlled by objective conditions only, experiences no difficulty in keeping purpose out of the cosmic picture. Fichte could not. He saw in the principle of purpose the golden thread running through all our experiences, bringing unity and meaning into life, and prescribing organic character to the world we live in. 'The very innermost spirit and soul of my philosophy,' he writes, 'is that man has nothing beyond experience, and that he obtains all that he has from experience, from life only. All his thinking, whether vague or scientific, whether popular or transcendental, proceeds from experience and concerns nothing but experience.' For Fichte, then, the speculative issue is an amazingly simple one: since every experience is given in the form of consciousness, the origin and nature of consciousness holds the key to all the problems concerning life and the universe.

Even the unreflective mind knows that the ego or self is the focal center of consciousness; it is the point from which all conscious activity proceeds, and it is the point to which all objects are referred. But the ego is more than this. According to the basic hypothesis of Fichte, mentioned above — and this is the germinal idea of his entire system — the ego is the point at which the creative activity of the Absolute emerges in the individual consciousness; it is the point at which the divine principle, God, enters into the life of man as the creative, energizing principle of his life. All the dignity and sacredness of life seem to center in selfhood, and to Fichte it determined the nature and vocation of man, as well. The divine agency in man does not violate the integrity of our selfhood, he argued, nor does it destroy freedom of the will. It reveals what true freedom really is. God is the vine and we are the branches; it is our unique privilege and our true vocation in life to bear much fruit.

The metaphysical aspect of Fichte's theory requires little attention and is briefly described. The world means nothing of itself, just as it has no independent self-existence. It exists for the sole purpose of affording man the occasion for realizing the ends of his existence, to furnish him the materials and the tools for achieving his high destiny. All the uniformities in nature, which are the special concern of science, all the order and intelligibility in our world, which are the practical assumptions of everyday life, imply a creative intelligence, who is the reality back of phenomena, whom we may appropriately call God. This intelligible world-order is a revelation of thought and purpose to the mind that is disposed to read it. The more significant revelation is the moral world-order which ' becomes alive and actual in us ' when conscience speaks. In our more exalted moments we are made to feel that it is the divine nature itself being revealed in all our experiences of beauty, in the impulse to better the conditions of community living, and to promote justice and the well-being of humanity.

In his more technical writings, in which Fichte explained the origin of consciousness, he gave the ultimate, creative principle the name of Absolute Ego, which seemed a rather vague and inept name for the God of religion. An article in which Fichte defended some of the implications of this conception of God did not escape the attention of the ecclesiastical authorities, and their vigorous protest ultimately led to Fichte's resignation from his professorship in the University of Jena. This controversy, which brought to a close the most fruitful years of his professional life, gave Fichte occasion to explain more fully his conception of God, and the reasons for holding it. It ought to be evident to every discriminating thinker, he argued, that we should not attribute to God any property or act that is unworthy of Him. Certainly we should not attribute anything to God that would involve a denial of his absoluteness. For these reasons we should never assign motives of anger or jealousy to him, or describe him in terms of human qualities. It is indeed true that personality is the form of human experience in which God most intimately and most convincingly reveals himself. That is why human personality is inviolably sacred to us. It is in the personality of others as well as in ourselves, that we get occasional flashes of insight into what God is, and what he ought to mean to us. What we get in these moments of illumination is a valuational experience — the absolute worth of the moral world-order. If we, standing within the limits of our finite experience, must attribute to God what to us is the most worthy predicate we can find in this experience, we must say he is the universal life-process realizing in us and through us the moral world-order. But personality as the form in which we realize this experience is a limitation, and peculiar to the finite mind, and therefore should not be attributed to God. But Fichte's defence of his theistic belief did not satisfy the consistory, which held that the denial of the personality of God is the essence of atheism; to which Fichte replied that his idea of atheism was to predicate personality, or any other finite attribute, of the Absolute One.

With the charge of atheism ringing in his ears, Fichte left Jena in 1799 for Berlin, Prussia being the only German state that did not close its doors to him. In those five short years of his professorship at the University of Jena, which was at that time the educational center of Germany, he had become an outstanding figure, not only in philosophy, but also in the practical application of his principles to the conduct of life. A tireless worker, he completed and published in these years the three main works of a technical nature in which he expounded the essentials of his system. But he also found time in this period to begin the series of popular writings, to which he devoted the remainder of his life, and which furnished the basis for his widespread and lasting influence. Of these popular writings the *Vocation of Man,* published within a few months after his arrival in Berlin, is justly the most prized, and the most helpful in understanding Fichte's conception of life. It was also his complete answer to the charge of irreligion.

Following the order of his own philosophical experiments, Fichte paints the picture of an earnest soul seeking a worthy meaning for life. For a while he wanders in the fields of Doubt, seeing no way of escape from the inexorable laws of the physical universe, and finding no answer to his questions concerning a spiritual world. Then, by the aid of Kant, he makes the glad discovery that it is Understanding in man that prescribes the inexorable laws to Nature, and that Knowledge puts her in her proper place as the instrument of man's purpose. But he finds Understanding is silent on the real issues of life. By Knowledge one can search out the hidden paths of Nature, but he can discover no thoroughfare to the Celestial City, which is man's ultimate destination. Finally, the soul, following Kant's example, turns for guidance to the Will, and is led to the realization that when one wills in accordance with the moral law he 'lays hold on eternity. . . . My will, directed . . . by myself alone becomes the source of true life and of eternity. . . . I become the sole source of my spiritual being. . . . I have life in myself. . . . By recognizing my will as the true source of moral goodness, and by actually keeping it true to that goodness, do I obtain the assurance and the possession of that super-sensible world.'

'And now the Eternal world rises before me more brightly, and the fundamental law of its order stands clearly and distinctly apparent to my mental vision. In this world, will alone is the first link in a chain of consequences that stretches through the whole invisible realm of spirit; as, in the physical world, a certain movement of matter is the first link in a material chain that runs through the whole system of nature. . . . I stand in the center of two entirely different worlds: a visible world in which action is the only moving power; and an invisible and, to knowledge, an incomprehensible world, in which will is the ruling principle. . . . It is not necessary that I should first be severed from the terrestrial world before I can obtain admission into the celestial one: — I am and live in it even now, far more truly than in the terrestrial.'

The vocation, which began as an examination of a philosophical problem, soon becomes an account of Fichte's own Pilgrim's Progress, and finally closes in a deeply religious strain with an exultant confession of faith: 'The Eternal Will is thus assuredly the Creator of the World. . . . It is His light through which we behold the light and all that it reveals to us. . . . All our life is His life. We are in His hand, and abide therein, and no one can pluck us out of His hand. We are eternal, because He is eternal. . . . All Death in Nature is Birth, and in Death itself appears visibly the exaltation of Life; it is not Death that kills, but the more living Life which, concealed behind the former, bursts forth into new development. . . . With all the fulness of life, order, and increase which I beheld in it, the world is but the curtain by which a world infinitely more perfect is concealed from me, and a germ from which that other world shall develop itself. My Faith looks behind this veil, and cherishes and animates this germ. It sees nothing definite, but it awaits more than it can conceive here below, more than it will ever be able to conceive in all time. . . . Sublime and Living Will! named by no name, compassed by no thought! I may well raise my soul to Thee, for Thou and I are not divided. Thy voice sounds within me, mine resounds in Thee; and all my thoughts, if they be but good and true, live in Thee also. . . . How Thou art and seemest to Thine own self, I can never know. After thousands of thousands of lives in the spirit world, I shall comprehend Thee as little as I do now. All that I conceive becomes finite in the process of conceiving it; and this can never, even by endless exaltation, rise into the Infinite. I have only this discursive, progressive thought, and I cannot conceive of any other. . . . *Thou knowest* what I think and what I will; *how* Thou knowest, I cannot understand. *Thou workest* in me the knowledge of my duty; *how,* I know not, nor need I know. *Thou willest* that my free obedience shall bring with it eternal consequences, but *how* this is done I can never hope to comprehend.'

'Thus do I live, thus am I, and thus am I unchangeable, firm, and completed for all Eternity; — for this is no existence assumed from without, — it is my own, true, essential Life and Being.'

This was the pith of Fichte's philosophy of life. It was strangely unconcerned with matters of mere earthly happiness and pleasure. What has Duty to do with these? The scientific interests of the mind were wholly ignored by it, for, to Fichte, the physical universe is merely the material of our duty. Thought as thought had little value for him; he was not, pre-eminently, a thinker, either by temperament or by habit. He was essentially ethical in nature; values for will, moral values, were the only values that really counted. He saw life as a high calling, as a divine vocation; it drew its inspiration and its rewards from above. Kant had made a breach in the walls that hemmed man in from the unseen and the eternal; Fichte levelled the walls and made man here and now a partaker of eternal life.

There is little more to add. At Berlin, Fichte soon became the inspiring center of a group of earnest men and women who sought his guidance in studying the problems of the day. Rousseau, Kant, and the French Revolution had come and gone, and a new crop of ideas had sprung up in consequence of them. Thinking people wanted to know more about progress, civilization, reason, freedom, humanity, natural rights, and the like. It was a time when formative influences, wisely directed, could go far in shaping the minds of youth to a freer and more generous conception of life. For his remaining fifteen years Fichte devoted himself to this task. There is no dignity in living save in the service of the divine idea, and that service may be rendered by everyone in his own station in life. All work having that end in view is ennobled, for it is spiritually constructive. It is the business of the one who best understands the divine idea of life, the 'Finished Scholar,' to expound this idea to others, or to guide them in practical ways to the realization of its ends. These labors gave Fichte the occasion for writing his *Vocation of the Scholar as Ruler, Vocation of the Scholar as Teacher,* and *Vocation of the Scholar as Author.* He discussed the divine idea of life in relation to industry, to education, to social and political affairs. The 'true State,' established in justice, shared the benefits of discovery and invention and of culture with all peoples. History is the collective life of humanity slowly developing in freedom and mutual good-will.

In the troubled years that followed the disastrous battle of Jena and the occupation of Napoleon's armies, Fichte's thought turned to the patriotic task of reviving the drooping morale of his countrymen in his *Addresses* *to the Germans.* At the time, Germany consisted of four separate kingdoms and a score of petty states, sundered by the jealousies of their rulers, and lacking any real sense of national unity. In these addresses, Fichte argued that only by planned education could the ideals and virtues of Teutonic history live from generation to generation, and ultimately beget a compact German nation; and he outlined the general features of such an educational programme, which afterward became the basis of the well-known Prussian system of public education. He was one of the leaders in the founding of the University of Berlin, also projected in the interest of national unity; and, surrounded by such scholars as Wolff, DeWette, Humboldt, Neander, Savigny, Schleiermacher, and Eichhorn, Fichte became, in 1810, its first rector.

But the end was near. The armies of the allies were moving to crush Napoleon at Waterloo, and Fichte offered his services as nurse for the wounded, in addition to his university labors. ‘ I must not only think, I must act. I have but one passion, one need, one all-engrossing desire, — to work upon those about me. The more I act the happier I seem to be.’ Weakened by over-work he fell victim of hospital fever and died, January twenty-seventh, 1814.

Fichte always believed that Kant's transcendental principle was the greatest single contribution ever made to reflective thought. Too long, he was convinced, had philosophy followed the method of the sciences that seek knowledge of facts in their special fields. It was transcendentalism's task to seek out the structural principles of the knowing act itself; to discover how these principles make knowledge possible, and how the human mind comes to have the ideals and values which make life rational. And, in making these investigations, the mind will be tracing the way the known world becomes a fact of consciousness for us. To the restless spirit of Fichte, believing that the quality of one's life is revealed in his deeds, the one ultimate value was moral value, and the good life was to feel oneself to be an instrument in the service of the moral ideal.

Friederich Wilhelm Schelling, for one semester the younger colleague and later the successor of Fichte at the University of Jena, caught his enthusiasm and brought to the development of the transcendental philosophy a wholly different temperament and a new emphasis. Schelling was South German — Swabian — *gemüthlich,* rich in imagination, and with the artist's appreciation of the concrete and sensuous, and correspondingly weak on the side of logical consistency. The transcendental principle spoke in him, too, but its language was the vivid, suggestive language of hidden meanings and symbols. He felt that Fichte's ethical bias had led him to do scant justice to the revelation of meaning and of beauty in nature. Nature has her own reality, her own life; she has her own story to tell of her origin and development, and of her own place in the divine order. The new physics was catching the popular imagination at the time, and the phenomena of magnetism suggested to Schelling the possibility of a new transcendental explanation of the physical universe, and, as the idea unfolded in his mind, of a restatement of the whole problem of transcendental philosophy.

When Schelling came to Jena, at the age of twenty-three, he had already published two minor works which carried the germs of his own coming system, and which won for him instant recognition as a seminal thinker. In these he proposed a *Philosophy of Nature,* conceived after the manner of Fichte's *Science of Knowledge,* and intended to supplement Fichte's own work. Briefly, his thought was this: if Nature is the embodiment of the Infinite Creative Spirit, then it is not to man an alien thing, but its inner nature is akin to our own, and it would be possible to trace the genesis and inner working of the spiritual life in Nature by following the transcendental principle's working in our own inner life. It could not long escape the attention of both Fichte and Schelling that the *Philosophy of Nature* carried implications inconsistent with the Fichtean thesis — that it was virtually proposing a fundamental restatement of the transcendental philosophy. No one saw this more clearly than Schelling's 'dearest friend,' Caroline Schlegel, whom he afterward married, who encouraged his breaking away from Fichte and asserting his own genius. 'I have always felt,' she wrote him, 'that, with all Fichte's skill in thinking, he has his well-defined limits; according to my thinking he lacks the divine instinct that you possess: should you once break away from his restraining influence and let your own genius assert itself, it would not be because of your philosophical genius, but because you have poetry in you, and he has none. It is poetic inspiration which leads you to produce, as it is penetrating insight which yields him intuitions. He has the bright light — he can illuminate; you have the glowing fire, you alone can produce. It is growing more and more your need to produce something eternal.' It was the voice of early German Romanticism speaking in the person of the gifted Caroline, who was the feminine exponent of the movement, and the 'something eternal ' that she summoned Schelling to produce was the philosophical exposition and defence of the Romanticist creed. Schelling, indeed, did have unusual qualifications for the task, and even his intellectual deficiencies helped to reveal the true import of the movement. He was over-mastered by his artistic temperament, and his own mode of philosophical expression was self-expression. The romantic movement was an outburst of undisciplined imagination, incapable of self-criticism and impatient of all objective standards. One's own peculiar genius, and not the balanced judgment of intellect, is one's sure guide to truth. Listen when the heart speaks and follow unquestioningly its leading, for the heart is the true interpreter of life. Let the free mind judge and act as seems good in its own eyes. Short-lived as the movement was, and of little significance for philosophy, it nevertheless released creative energies in other fields of culture, enriching the music and drama and the lyric poetry, not only of Germany, but of all Europe, during the nineteenth century.

Schelling's contribution to Romanticism, which was also his contribution to philosophy, was the far-reaching thought that dominated his mind throughout his long and varied career, which thought, however, he seemed unable satisfactorily to formulate. He made six attempts to do so, the last being the least successful one. Only this thought, which was at the heart of all of his systems, is of living interest today.

In the *Critique of the Faculty of Judgment,* the third and least known of his Critiques, Kant gave to the terms ' organic ' and ' organism ' meanings that were wholly new, and that were to become deeply significant for modern thought. The term ' organic,' originally introduced by Aristotle, signified nothing more than instrumental. It suggested the necessary fitting together of parts to make a machine that works. Organism meant to him a natural mechanism, as distinguished from one that had been put together. Down through the middle ages, and even in the writings of Descartes and Leibniz, the terms continued to hold these meanings until the close of the eighteenth century. The first suggestion of a change in meaning came from Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi, a contemporary of Kant, who held that: ' to conceive the possibility of an organic being, it will be necessary to conceive first that which constitutes its unity; the whole being before the parts.' It was left for Kant, as he neared the close of his life, to give the term its definitive meaning, by pointing out the intrinsic unity of the organism which constitutes it a living whole. In an organism the parts are living members, in reciprocally dependent relations. To be organic, therefore, means to have life, to be determined by an inner principle of growth, to have its own immanent teleology. It was the merit of Schelling that he was the first to see the rich possibilities of this concept of organism, as furnishing a new point of view from which to interpret life and the universe.

From this point of vantage, Schelling saw the universe as one all-embracing, living whole. Nature exhibited herself as cosmic organism, whose inner unity is a principle of growth in which a spiritual meaning and purpose is recording itself. The deciphering of this hidden message immanent in the life of nature has been the despair of every idealism since the days of Plato. The most natural and persistent attempt to read it, made by the various rationalisms, was doomed to failure from the beginning, for conceptual thought is analytical, and in analysis the unity of a whole is destroyed and its meaning is lost. The many mysticisms saw that very clearly, and believed that if nature and life yielded up their inmost secrets to man, the revelation would come in the form of living experience, in an immediate experience of feeling or intuition. But, unfortunately for the mystics, any purely immediate experience loses all clearness and distinctness, and, therefore, has no intelligible character. Meaning is never imparted to the merely passive, receptive mind; it is only when we are active and discriminating that we become intelligences. No one saw that with greater clearness than did Kant and Fichte, but they erred in supposing that the door to reality was opened by only one active principle — will. Will does make the moral ideal a reality to us, but it surely is not the principle that enables us to hear the voice of reason that speaks through nature. None of our mental faculties, taken singly and alone, is equal to such a task. Only our whole spiritual being, becoming self-conscious in the free play of imagination, thus giving formal expression to what we most deeply feel, can do that. It was the capacity which his romanticist friends called 'genius,' that Schelling has here in mind: that differential quality of one's individuality, which comes to consciousness in the impulse to create artistic forms in music, in art, in literature, in religion, and in philosophy. Nature is the embodiment of the art-impulse; it is the work of the Great Artist, God. Man is likewise the embodiment of creative reason, partly conscious and partly unconscious embodiment, and it is through the artistic impulse, his 'genius,' that he becomes aware of his high origin. It is this kinship of man and Nature which enables him to anticipate her words, and read the dialectic of her processes by the dialectic of his own inner life. Our poetic insight into the working of Nature, therefore, was Schelling's idea of Science, and our philosophical task is not to re-think the eternal meaning embodied in the Creator's work, as rationalism would have us do, but to set the eternal idea free from its temporal wrappings, and let its germinal impulse shape for itself new forms of expression. This task has inexhaustible possibilities, for in art we touch upon the infinite. That is why in every great work of art, in every masterpiece in music, in poetry, in the cathedrals of nature and of man, there is something ever new, there is endless refreshing and self-revealing. They start the springs of self-renewing in us; in living these creations, we recreate ourselves.

All this was highly congenial to Goethe, whose theories of art and of life were largely influenced by the ideas of Schelling. To him nature was en-souled, it was the outer garment of divinity, and her story she is forever telling to those who have ears to hear. The same thought lives in the writings of Coleridge, of Wordsworth, and of Shelley. We meet it again in the opening lines of 'Thanatopsis' and in everything Emerson wrote. It was the liberating thought of much of the poetry of the nineteenth century.

Schelling's contribution to the philosophy of life was, in the main, this æsthetic turn which he gave to transcendental idealism, and the stimulus he gave to others to trust the guidance of the artistic impulse in their search for truth and reality. To Fichte, the way of life was steep and narrow, and the vocation of man was inspiring but stern; to Schelling, life should be genial and expansive; it should be the fine art of disclosing to one's self and to others the immanent reason in all things. For Schelling there were no wrongs to right, no evil to overcome. Evil is a necessary stage in the long process of realizing the good in life; imperfection must be expected in the stages through which the divine idea must pass in the ascending steps in nature up to man. Man's highest good is self-realization, in which the individual life finds place in the realm of nature. History is the ceaseless progress of man in deciphering the revelation of God in the lives of men and in the workings of nature.

Although Schelling's transcendental idealism passed into a religious phase, becoming finally a philosophy of mythology, the real representative of Romanticism in the field of religion was Schleiermacher. According to him, religion is ' the sense and taste for the Infinite . . . the feeling of reverence for the greatness and majesty of the universe, the feeling of absolute dependence of the finite on the Infinite . . . it is our feeling of relation to the Whole.'

Religion resigns all claims on anything that belongs to either science or morality. Religion, equally with these, has its own nature and serves its own unique end. However, one who has received what religion has to give goes forth spiritually reinforced to his intellectual or moral task. We are not actively but passively receptive of the revelation of reason in the all-encompassing world about us. ' The Universe is ceaselessly active, and at every moment is revealing itself to us. . . . Religion is essentially contemplative; the contemplation of the pious is the immediate consciousness of the universal existence of all finite things, in and through the Infinite, and of all temporal things in and through the Eternal. Religion is to seek this and find it in all that lives and moves, in all growth and change, in all doing and suffering. It is to have life and know life in immediate feeling, only as such an existence in the Infinite and Eternal. . . . Wherefore, religion is a life in the infinite nature of the Whole, in the One, and in the All, in God.'

The religious life is not a thing for special times and places, and requires none of the furniture of formal worship. ' Uninterruptedly, like sacred music, religious feeling should accompany one in all his active life. . . . A man's special calling is the melody of his life, and it remains a simple, meagre series of notes, unless religion, with its endlessly rich variety, accompany it with all notes, and raise the simple song to a full-voiced glorious harmony.'

But there are ethical conditions to be met before one is in tune with the Infinite. ' In order to receive the World-Spirit, and have religion, man must first, in love, and through love, have found humanity. . . . Humanity is for you the true universe; the rest is only added in so far as it is related to humanity or forms its surroundings. . . . Seek this humanity in each individual; regard the nature of every person as one revelation of it, and of all the troubles that now oppress you no trace will remain. . . . I, at least, boast myself of a moral disposition; I know how to value human excellence, and commonness could almost overwhelm me with the feeling of contempt, were it not that religion gives me a great and glorious view of all mankind.' It is Schleiermacher, The Spokesman for Romanticism when religion's place in life is the theme, who is speaking here.

Schelling will be remembered as one of those who helped the Western world to a consciousness of history. The one great fact to him was life, growth, movement, the actual flow of events burdened with ideal meaning. For him, life was founded on history. It is a part of the world-evolution, and its highest privilege is to symbolize in infinite variety the eternal meaning it feels, rather than copy it in one changeless pattern. The freedom of self-expression was the message he brought to the interpretation of life.

Fichte's saying that the personal equation of a man will determine what kind of philosophy he will have, was exemplified in the three varieties of trancendentalism which arose out of the philosophy of Kant. Hegel, the third transcendentalist, differed mentally from both Fichte and Schelling, and his reflective needs demanded a more sober and logically coherent interpretation of life than either of his predecessors gave. The prevailing impulse of his mind was to understand, to get the meaning of things in all their bearings. Unlike Fichte and Schelling, whose thoughts came in flashes of intuition, Hegel was a slow, methodical thinker. He was a long time in finding himself, intellectually, but his slow development meant a more solid and substantial maturity. A tradition still lingers at the University of Tübingen, where he and Schelling were fellow students, that when Hegel left the Stift, the registrar wrote after his name — *nullus,* but that some time afterward the word was crossed out and *multus* was substituted.

The motive which impelled Hegel to philosophize was the thinker's need to reach consistency and systematic completeness in his intellectual life. The first step was to realize exactly what understanding means and what it involves. Reflection revealed that nothing is really understood until it is seen in the light of some more inclusive meaning of which it is a part. One understands what ‘ school ’ means only when he understands something of the meaning of education; and he understands what ‘ education ’ means only when he appreciates humanity’s need for a larger and more efficient life. Then again, to judge the merits of two competing systems of philosophy means to view both from a point of vantage higher than the systems themselves. Set down, as he is, in the midst of things that make up his world, man’s constant effort to maintain himself by thought and act as a rational being requires that he bring the scattered and chaotic fragments of his everyday experience into some degree of unity, and to subject them to the standards of clear thinking. He would need to interpret experience, and that would mean to philosophize.

Hegel claimed for his system the unique merit of embodying the essential motives of all the great systems of the past. It was a part of his thought, also, that the history of human institutions recorded the growing sense of life’s meaning and value, and, therefore, he accepted these institutions as pragmatic expressions of the immanent reason in human nature. For these reasons he held that his system was the culminating expression of the mind’s understanding of the world-problem, and that it would prove to be the definitive philosophy of life. Quite apart from Hegel’s claim for finality for his system, he did succeed in bringing the thought-tendencies of many divergent lines of speculation into the unity of one elaborate formula. The great wealth of reflective material of more than twenty-two centuries awaited the synoptic mind that would prove to be capable of dealing with it, and Hegel, realizing the full scope of the project, undertook the task. As part of the material at his disposal there were, (1) the motive of *idealism* (metaphysical): the categories of nature correspond to the categories of the mind; the processes of the physical universe are, at bottom, the processes of Mind; (2) the motive of *intellectualism:* the cognitive faculty is the authoritative faculty of the mind; all other faculties are subordinate to, or derived from, intellect; (3) the motive of *rationalism:* conceptual thought is the measure of reality, and the criterion of knowledge; the real is the rational and the rational is the real; (4) the motive of *monism:* the fundamental law of all being, physical and mental, is the law of unity; ultimate being is one; (5) the motive of *transcendence:* ultimate being is infinite, absolute, eternal, divine; the essential nature of absolute being transcends the range of finite thought; (6) the motive of *optimism:* the foundations of the universe are laid in wisdom and righteousness; progress in human history is grounded in the immanent reason in human nature; God is in his heaven, — all's right with the world; (7) the motive of *idealism* (axiological): absolute or ideal values — truth, beauty, good — are grounded in the nature of ultimate being, God; conscience is the voice of God in the soul, and the moral law is divine law; (8) the assumption that human personality is the crown of finite being, and is inviolably sacred; (9) the assumption that man's desire for freedom and for immortality are the natural expressions of his rational nature, which is their warrant; (10) the assumption that the unity of the human race is the basic fact of human life; that the concepts humanity, civilization, and culture mark the spiritual progress in the evolution of mankind; and (11) the assumption that in the interpretation of human life and of nature the explaining concept organism is fundamental; mechanism is organism read backward. Most of these ideas rooted back in the soil of ancient Greece and Palestine and took deeper meaning as the Western mind struggled with the world-situation during the intervening centuries; a few grew out of the social consciousness of the eighteenth century.

At the beginning of his career, Hegel was wholly in agreement with Schelling, his colleague, whom he later succeeded at the University at Jena. He was profoundly impressed with the evidences of mind in nature, and with the possibilities of objective idealism's interpretation. Nature is a fabric of definite pattern, shot through and through with threads of meaning and purpose. It is meaning made corporate, very real and amazingly intelligible. Its mechanisms are really organisms read backward, as Leibniz suggested, and all things, including man, are manifestations of one all-pervading Life. But Hegel saw something Schelling overlooked: man and nature are not the only embodiments of absolute meaning. The social and political institutions of humanity have a kind of objectivity and an existence of their own. Men come and go, and generations pass away, but these institutional forms of meaning live on and become important factors in history. They are embodiments of the corporate interests and achievements of the past — 'psychical creations,' Wundt called them — and might be termed the funded meanings of bygone ages. Religion, moral ideals, art, science, social and legal customs and traditions, the family and the state — these have a mode of existence different from that of nature, but they are in their own way just as real, just as massive and compelling in their influence on life as are the things of sense. Fichte could see morality, and Schelling could see art, but neither could see the whole. Hegel's conclusion was that both subjective idealism and objective idealism should be transcended by absolute idealism which would bring all aspects of experience under one all-inclusive formula.

When Kant, in the *Critique of Pure Reason,* was investigating the function of the categories in the process of putting articulate meaning into the sense-data, in the mind's making of experience, he came upon an important clue which seems to have had for him only a passing interest. He found that these categories, twelve in number, naturally fall into four groups of three categories each, and that the numbers of each triad mutually imply each other. This curious discovery, observed Kant, ' makes us ponder,' especially since in each group ' the third category always arises from the combination of the second with the first.' Whatever may have come from Kant's pondering on this transcendental clue is not known, but we do know that Fichte seized upon it in his *Science of Knowledge* to show the method of the creative principle in generating human consciousness with all its varied experiences. Schelling found the same dialectic movement in nature, being especially evident in the principle of polarity in magnetism, electricity, and chemical processes. But it remained for Hegel to see in this principle the clue to a new logic, by which transcendental philosophy received at his hands its complete and final formulation. He stressed the fact that the third category does not follow *deductively* from the subsumption of one category under the other; rather, it arises, *genetically,* out of the opposition of the two that have something in common. It is *new* meaning that springs out of the attempt to overcome the dualism of logical opposites. Thus, unity and multiplicity are logical opposites; the dualism cannot be overcome by reducing one to terms of the other. But the dualism can be transcended, only to reappear as elements in a new concept — ' totality ' or ' whole,' which signifies ' unity in and through multiplicity.' If all the categories, by which we think, are thus connected in genetic order — and such is the meaning of Kant's discovery — we have not only the law of their development, but also the law by which the world of experience shows itself as a process of growth in meaning and purpose of the cosmic mind. To trace this meaning would not be to follow the tenuous threads of logic in abstract reasoning, but to envisage the stages in the development of the cosmos and in the life of man as the evolution of cosmic reason itself.

Hegel's system undertook to unfold the implications of three interrelated concepts, experience, meaning, and reality, which set limits to all possible thought and knowledge. All the problems of human life, all the problems of the universe, fall within the compass of these terms, and find their possible solutions within them. The task of philosophy, then, must be the systematic exploration of these concepts in their reciprocal relations, as we find them embodied in living thought.

It was Plato's thought which first sundered appearance, which we experience, and reality, which transcends experience, and the distinction became thereafter one of the major traditions of philosophy. Hegel, following the lead of Fichte and Schelling, broke completely with this tradition. Only in abstraction are experience and reality set over against each other as separate and distinct. They are not so in living thought. Each implies the other, and each requires the other to complete its meaning. Moreover, the very notion of a reality that could not be experienced is absurd. We could never know it. We could not even think it or gain a concept of it. Nothing could be predicated of it, not even the predicate existence, for all predicates are borrowed from experience. The notion, then, would collapse for want of content, and there would remain — nothing.

What, then, is reality, and what is its relation to experience? It must in some fashion be identified with experience. That conclusion must stand as final. Furthermore, reality can be nothing apart from appearance. Try as we may, we can qualify the real only in terms of phenomena. Hegel and his contemporary in Kant's old chair at Königsberg, Herbart, were far apart in their philosophical views, but they agreed in holding that reality was given in appearance: '*so viel Schein, so viel Hindeutung auf Sein.*' This conclusion, also, must stand as final. The distinction, then, which we make between appearance and reality is a distinction within experience, and its meaning is to be sought in experience.

Existence and meaning are the warp and web of experience. From them experience takes body and pattern. They are the co-ordinates, the elements of reference, by which all the varied concerns of intelligence are located. Every experience is, thus, a mental event and yet more than a mere event. It has a fringe or penumbra of meaning, which gives it rational status. Our interest in any experience may center on the one or on the other of these elements — on the 'that' of it, or on the 'what' of it, but only because the experience is the union of both. The two are distinguishable as aspects of experience, but they are as indivisible and inseparable as the two sides of a sheet of paper.

It is the meaning aspect of experience that is the especial concern of philosophy, because all life's problems are problems of meaning. It is the very light and life of intelligence. By it life sets its goal and orders its course and judges its successes and its failures. Thought moves in terms of meaning, and recognizes no limits save the limits of meaning itself. These limits define for us the conceivable, the possible to think, and by doing so determine for us also the possible to be. Meaning has its own inner structure, its own laws, its own logic. It gives coherence and order to life, distinguishes true and false, real and unreal, beauty and ugliness, better and worse, furnishes the medium for a common life of hopes and beliefs, achievements and progress.

And now, what about reality? We have seen that reality can be nothing apart from experience. More specifically, we now see that reality can be nothing apart from meaning, for real and unreal are distinctions of meaning, and are made in the interest of meaning. Just what, then, does it mean to be real, and why is reality a term of high praise in the intellectual life?

In the life-history of individuals, experiences as mental events come and go, but their meanings live on in memory, and, from age to age, they survive in the many forms of culture and in the institutions of civilization. These have been referred to as the funded meaning of the past, as the living past, but they are also appropriately given the name of Experience. As such, it is our social heritage, and, as we grow in intelligence, it becomes, by appropriation, in some measure a part of the accumulated meaning which each of us calls his experience. Now, nothing is real to the individual mind that does not accord with the individual's experience. This appeal to individual experience does not finally settle the matter; but until appeal is made to a more inclusive experience, coherence with individual experience is the test of reality. The Scottish crusader's explanation that in his country water gets so hard at times that one can ride across the streams on horseback only amused the Saracen host as a pleasant fiction. Always, the appeal to the truth or to reality in any situation is the appeal from the narrower to the more inclusive experience. Reality is found in the interpreting of the lesser in terms of the greater, in finding the incomplete meaning of the part taken up in the completer meaning of experience as a whole. Professor Josiah Royce, whose conception of reality was modeled on that of Hegel's, sets forth his thought with singular clearness: ' There is, for us, as we are, experience. Our thought undertakes the interpretation of this experience. Every intelligent interpretation of an experience involves, however, the appeal from this experienced fragment to some more organized whole of experience, in whose unity this fragment is conceived as finding its organic place. To talk about any reality which this fragmentary experience indicates is to conceive this reality as the content of a more organized experience. To assert that there is any absolutely real fact indicated by our experience, is to regard this reality as presented to an absolutely organized experience, in which every fragment finds its place. This absolute experience is related to our experience as an organic whole is to its own fragments. It is an experience which finds fulfilled all that the completest thought can rationally conceive as genuinely possible.'

The 'absolute experience' here mentioned is obviously not realized by the finite mind, either in the development of the individual intelligence or in the progress of the race, and yet Hegel held that it is implicitly present in every rational experience. 'Common fancy,' he said, 'puts the Absolute far away in a world beyond. The Absolute is rather directly before us, so present, that so long as we think we must, though without express consciousness of it, always carry it with us and always use it.' It was an old thought Hegel had here in mind, and one that gave great comfort to the theologians of the middle ages. The consciousness of our finiteness is implicitly the consciousness of the Infinite Being. One would never entertain the idea of imperfect beings were it not that the mind already possesses, vaguely it may be, the idea of a perfect being. The whole must somehow be given, foreshadowed, implicitly present in the part in order to be recognized as a part. In this way, Hegel said, absolute experience is given in every experience, and 'everything phenomenal is somehow real.'

Such were the seminal ideas out of which the Hegelian system grew. The immediate fact for man was found to be the ever-widening and deepening stream of experience, which makes up his life-fabric. As the stream of life deepens and widens, man's world expands and takes on new and wider meaning. All that makes for intelligence in man, all values and standards for reflection and for achieving, are distinctions evoked by thought within experience, and have no meaning apart from experience. Within this all-inclusive process of experience, with its intricate and endless web of meaning, there arise and take their places in man's life all the treasures of civilization — knowledge, morality, the political and social institutions, the arts and religion. Even the physical universe with its orderly and intelligible processes belongs here, for the only world we know is the world we experience. To think is to explore some region of experience. To reason is to follow carefully its implications. Everything has its truth, its reality as an organic part of the whole experience, for reality, which is the ideal goal of human striving, is just this all-inclusive, rationally coherent experience. To seek to understand life and the world from the point of view of experience, to interpret life's varied interests in the light of it, is to undertake the task of philosophy.

As the movement of thought follows the linkage of meaning, and never transcends it, Hegel saw that his first task was to investigate the structural framework within which this movement takes place. Since the time of Aristotle, the structural elements of thought had been known as categories, and Kant had made the interesting discovery, but seemed not to fully appreciate its significance, that these categories are organically related and follow a genetic order. Here was something of vast importance which the systematic thinker could not overlook. The system of the categories, to Hegel's mind, constitutes an organic whole, and, because of this fact, it contains not only the prospectus of all possible thought and knowledge, but of all possible being as well. In such a system, one could begin with the most abstract category, and, by the dialectic method, follow the threads of inner connection until at last the whole framework of meaning is completed in the least abstract of the categories. All this Hegel set forth in most elaborate and technical fashion in the first great division of his system, the *Logic.* In it he not only presented a morphology of thought and knowledge, but also a logical blueprint of the way ultimate reality comes to expression in nature and in the finite mind. This work, said Hegel, 'demonstrates how natural Logic is to man, for indeed, it is his real nature.'

'The system of Logic,' said Hegel, 'is the Kingdom of Shadows, the world of simple realities, freed of all sensuous concretion.' His next step, then, is to show how these shadowy forms take on sensuous concretion in experience. The second grand division of the system, the *Philosophy of Nature,* begins where the *Logic* left off — with the lowest stage of the concretion of reality. 'Nature should be considered as a system of stages, the one of which necessarily proceeds out of the other, and is the next truth to that from which it follows,' is the way Hegel expresses his thought at this point. It is not biological evolution he has in mind here, he is careful to say; rather, it is an evolution in which the whole is actively present in the developing part. It is an evolution of meaning as exhibited in the different kingdoms of nature.

The really fruitful part of the Hegelian system was reached in the third and last division, the *Philosophy of Mind,* in which the universal spirit or reason is exhibited in the maturing consciousness of man. 'Reason,' Schelling had said, 'sleeps in nature, dreams in the animal, wakes in man.' Hegel undertook to show that this waking takes place gradually, first in the instincts and temperamental impulses, and then through intervening stages of consciousness, until, finally, reflective thought and its ideal creations are reached. The world's religions, the moral ideals and codes, the various embodiments of the artistic spirit, the political and social institutions, history and civilization — each of these he put in its place as a phase of the world-process of evoking reason in the experience of man.

Hegel's philosophy of life emerges at every point in his exposition of the *Philosophy of Mind.* The Supreme Good is the reality that is the truth of every ideal, and that is the final meaning and purpose of all things. To be satisfied with no half-truths, but to live into the spirit of the Whole, is happiness. To see the soul of goodness in things evil, is to find the answer to pessimism. Life teaches that wisdom and righteousness are the foundations of the universe, and man's freedom and well-being depend on how he builds thereon. Consequently, intolerance is the vice of small-mindedness: we find contradiction and obstruction only at the surface of things; everywhere at the bottom are peace and concord. One should learn that the spiritual advances only over obstructions.

His ideas on history and on social institutions proved to be his most fruitful contributions. To those who caught his inspiration, past and future took on new meaning, and brought new faith and hope into the present. It is true that humanity have groped blindly in their religious strivings, but that they have groped in the same direction is the significant fact. No one can ignore the intellectual and moral stupidities and perversities of the race, yet the stress on the distinction between true and false, right and wrong, higher and lower has never wavered, and grows more insistent as time wears on. The human institutions, such as the family and the state, in spite of faults and failures, are not mere accidents, but spring from the immanent reason in life, and have their own dignity and sacredness. These were some of the things that brought a larger faith in the essential rightness of things. The history of mankind is living logic, working out its own immanent meaning. For that reason error and wrong are sure to defeat themselves. *Die Weltgeschichte ist das Weltgericht.*

In spite of the wealth of intuition brought by Hegel's thought, which was destined to enrich all fields of culture, his system, as a system, broke down under its own weight almost immediately after his death. The situation was not helped by his violating two of his own cherished maxims. No philosophy which claims to be final and absolute will last, he had said. It can hope to present only one aspect of the final truth. However, because so many motives of human thought and aspiration united in his own formula, Hegel claimed for his system the absolute and final truth of life and of the universe. Hegel even furnished the weapon that was finally turned against his system. For if reality is conceived as an endless becoming, there can be no final stage and no final realization of its meaning. The Hegelian system, by the logic of its own dialectic, could never aspire to be more than the Synthesis of past wisdom and the Thesis of the next step in knowledge. The Antithesis which went out from this Thesis was the revolt against the philosophy of reason which had held the minds of the Western world since the days of Socrates and Plato, and as a substitute was proposed the philosophy of unreason. The end of the transcendental movement thus became the beginning of a new epoch in speculative thought.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

LIFE IS A TASK TO BE DONE — NOT UNDERSTOOD — SCHOPENHAUER AND NIETZSCHE

> *If we estimate the philosophers of the nineteenth century not by the influence which they severally exerted in their own day, or by the intrinsic value of their own work, but solely by the measure in which they are still able to command attention, none of them seem so effective as Arthur Schopenhauer.*
>
> THOMAS BAILEY SAUNDERS

> *Nietzsche is not merely an individual voice. He is the mouth piece of the modern world. In him its most secret impulses and tendencies have come to the threshold of consciousness and have shown themselves to the day. . . . He presents his reading of life to our age as a tremendous touch-stone with which to test its values. If he rightly does so, we are in the actual presence of one of the few great spiritual events of the centuries.*
>
> HAMLIN

UPON the death of Hegel, the scientific tendency in Germany, that had been held back by Romanticism and the idealistic movements which grew out of Kant's philosophy, broke out in a number of divergent movements. The upswing of experimental science was already underway in England and France, and the German mind was eager to push aside speculative interests, and join in the search for positive knowledge. Electricity, magnetism, comparative anatomy, and brain physiology were favorite subjects at the university, and were rapidly becoming topics of popular interest. It is worthy of note that Hermann Lotze, Wilhelm Wundt, and our own William James, began their university life in Germany as students of anatomy and physiology, afterward moved on through brain physiology to psychology, reaching, finally, the field of philosophy. As a philosophic revolt against idealism, Ludwig Feuerbach did not scruple to translate Hegel's philosophy into materialistic terms, initiating a movement which grew more crudely materialistic a generation later in the theories of Vogt, Moleschott, Czolbe, and Büchner. Another young Hegelian, of a social turn of mind, also veered toward the left, and repudiating the idealistic conception of the state, set up in its stead the Marxian doctrine of social and economic life. The people were no longer responding to soaring moods and transcendental interpretations of life, with the confident optimism which they sponsored. The sobering influence of the Napoleonic wars, so disastrous to Prussia's prestige, was heavy upon them, and the growing political unrest that was to break out in the futile rebellions of 1848 was to end in the gloom of disillusion. Toward the middle of the century, voices were raised asking if one could continue to believe that the cosmic scheme was grounded in wisdom and goodness. Is Nemesis more real than Providence; is happiness a chimera, and suffering after all the end of existence?

Schopenhauer's philosophy, which was born out of this mood, was an open revolt against reason as ultimate principle of explanation, and against the transcendental idea in particular. For him, there was no warrant for conceiving the universe as the embodiment of creative thought and purpose, nor were there grounds for reading into the record of human events the threads of historical continuity, that led to the idealistic 'windbaggery' in the early years of the century. Leibniz in the seventeenth century had given the world the idea of history as the story of humanity. 'The present is weighted with the past, and pregnant with the future.' A half-century later, Lessing advanced on this idea with the thought that the whole process of history should be viewed as man's education in reason. The tang of optimism in all this disgusted Schopenhauer, and his mood was not improved by Herder's undertaking to write the history of civilization; but when Hegel made history the subject of philosophy, and interpreted the world-process as reality evolving in time, being motivated by its own inner logic, and exhibiting its rationality in progressive stages in human history, Schopenhauer felt he was commissioned to raise a banner over against such nonsense.

When his main work, *The World as Will and Idea,* appeared in 1819, in which his own thesis of irrationalism was proposed and defended in detail, his readers found that he was proposing that the Western world should make a complete break with its intellectual past, and accept an oriental conception of life and the world in its place. The invitation was not accepted. Indeed, at the time, Schopenhauer's thesis did not seem to merit serious consideration, and he had to learn some years later, to his great humiliation, that his publisher had disposed of most of the copies of his masterpiece as waste paper. But Schopenhauer lived to see the recognition he so much desired. Nothing more strikingly marks the change that came over the intellectual mood of Europe during the latter half of the nineteenth century than the wide-spread and sustained interest in Schopenhauer's conception of life and its place in the world.

The irrational as an ultimate point of view for envisaging man and nature was obviously a possible one with interesting possibilities, and it was inevitable that, in time, it would be hazarded in philosophy by someone. For three thousand years the thought had been at the heart of religion in India, and its possibilities for life and its institutions could be seen in her history. Schopenhauer's value to philosophy, and his pre-eminence among thinkers, rest largely on the novelty of his undertaking in Western philosophy, and on the uncompromising fidelity with which he exploited the consequences of his main thesis. There is no doubt that he was singularly well qualified by temperament and by habits of mind to undertake the task. All the unreason in nature and in history that he took delight in tracing found sympathetic response in the inner contradictions and the wayward moods of his own difficult personality. He was early known as a 'difficult child,' and as a man he was notoriously hard to get on with. But Schopenhauer's personal equation does not wholly explain his pessimism, but even if it did, his philosophy made a notable contribution to a fuller understanding of the problem of life.

But neither the novelty of his world-view, nor his remarkable genius for lucid and suggestive exposition, explains the hold which his thought took, and continues to take, on the minds of many constructive thinkers. From Socrates down through the centuries, intellect had occupied the chief seat of authority in the conduct of life, and reason was its ultimate standard and law. But for a long time the exclusive authority of intellect, in life's practical interests especially, had been a matter of doubt, even when the law of reason remained unchallenged. 'Reasoning banishes reason,' was the way Molière put it as early as the days of Descartes and Spinoza, and the thought found its classical expression a century later in the *Nouvelle Héloïse,* and culminated in romanticism at the close of the century. Even Kant, confessing that his natural inclination and early education had disposed him to the aristocracy of intellect, and to look down upon those humbler elements of human nature, the sentiments, had to confess when his mind matured: ' Rousseau has set me right. The boasted superiority has vanished; I am learning to respect mankind.' Hamann and Jacobi and the ' nature-intoxicated ' Herder should be mentioned as furthering the anti-intellectualistic movement. A new era in Western thought and civilization was at hand.

None of these anti-intellectualisms, however, countenanced any disrespect for reason's just claims, although Schelling, an ardent rationalist, was tempted, toward the close of his long career, to think that possibly unreason was, after all, at the seat of things. Schopenhauer required little temptation, after there fell into his hands a version of the Upanishads, and found that his own thought-tendencies were fully expressed in the ideas of Hinduism.

According to Schopenhauer, the life of the individual is, at the beginning, a mere stream of sense-impulse, without self-consciousness or self-control; and in his mature years of reflective choice, the inner core of his life continues to be this selfsame stream of organic impulse. All that he ever learns about himself, after careful investigation, leads to the conclusion that he is by nature merely a behaving organism, endowed with certain native tendencies, each with its own direction. To live means to be a ' going concern,' ceaselessly responding to stimuli, under the guidance of intellect. Man soon learns that consciousness accompanies but a small part of life, and that in the hidden depths of the subconscious lie the springs of action of all behavior that we call conscious and deliberate. Organic impulses are also the root-sources of our thought-tendencies and valuations, which are the distinctive marks of human intelligence. That is why effective argument appeals to the instincts, even when directed to logical consideration. All live issues are fed from below. The vaunted rational nature, which is supposed to make us human beings, is merely up-trained instinct; and all the basic human institutions which support our social and economic life owe their existence and their vitality to these primitive organic tendencies. Here, said Schopenhauer, we find the key to the solution of all life-problems: life is driven from behind, not led from before; seek not for the grounds of things, why they are as they are; seek rather the causes, how they came to be what they are. As science can never give a final explanation of reality, the true cause must be sought by metaphysical inquiry. This metaphysical principle, which is the condition of all existence, sentient and insentient, Schopenhauer found to be a blind, ever-unsatisfied impulse, ever striving at the center of all things. He called it, for want of a better name, Will.

Schopenhauer is his own best expositor of the nature of this principle and the manner of its working. ‘ On the lowest stages of nature,’ he says, ‘ we see Will exhibiting itself as a blind tendency, a dark, dull striving, far from all immediate knowableness.’ In another connection he says: ‘ The course of reflection will lead one to recognize the force which germinates and vegetates in plants, the force through which the crystal is formed, that by which the magnet is turned toward the north pole, the force whose shock he experiences from the contact of two different kinds of metal, the force which appears in the elective affinities of matter as repulsion and attraction, decomposition and composition, and, lastly, even gravitation, which acts so powerfully throughout matter, draws the stone to earth and the earth to the sun, — all these he will recognize as different only in their phenomenal existence, but in their inner nature as identical as that which is directly known to him as intimately and so much better than anything else, and which in its most distinct manifestation is called Will.'

Let us try to get this thought in its more important bearings. Stripped of all illusions of the sense, the world is an unpicturable process by which the primitive force or Will objectifies itself through a series of graded steps. Each higher level is marked by increased complexity, which at the stage of animal life shows itself in biological functions including consciousness, and at the human level as self-conscious and self-controlled action. In the animal, Will appears as instinct and desire, and as the sense-images which are the objects of its craving and striving. On the human plane these images become representations of an outer world which stretches out in space and time, and are invested with all the properties which make them intelligible to us. Science, following the clue of intellect, sees this phenomenal world as the real world, but in truth it is merely a constant illusion; the real world is the ever-restless, striving Will. The phenomenal world has its own place in our life, and science which explores it has its undoubted value, for it increases our control over nature, broadens our perceptual horizon, and enables us to plan confidently for coming events. Even the power of thought is unable to reveal to us the reality which is the driving force in all existence, because — and here Schopenhauer's anti-intellectualism finds definite expression — one can never by thinking get beyond thought; thought is restricted to passing from concept to concept, following the linkage of implication; it can never break through the web of meaning and lay hold on reality, the primal force-principle, Will.

When will men learn the deepest secret about human nature — that the thought-life, with its varied interests, springs from purely biological motivation? How often does raw instinct show through when the thin veneer of civilization cracks, and how often is pugnacity in the saint mistaken for piety! Reason is not a unique quality of the soul, and peculiar to man, but is only a later manifestation of the same quality that we humans share with the animal world. ' The bird of a year old has no idea of the eggs for which she builds her nest; the young spider has no idea of the prey for which he spins his web; nor has the ant-lion any idea of the ants for which he digs a trench for the first time. In such actions of these creatures, the will is clearly active as in their other actions, but it is a blind activity, which is indeed accompanied by knowledge, but not guided by it.' But in the inner life of man, the hidden workings of the ' blind inexorable drive of unconscious nature ' force their way across the threshold of consciousness, in the cravings and desires, the ruthless strivings, which are the beginnings of what we call our rational will. Here, in the inner life of man, we come face to face with the reality which has been the fruitless quest of philosophy for more than two thousand years. Here Schopenhauer is nearing the pinnacle of his thought. This reality is not the lovely thing of the idealist's dream. It is not the ' Friend behind phenomena ' of the trustful religionist, nor is it the eternal reason of the Platonic tradition in philosophy. It is blind cosmic force, stark unreason, and all it offers, or can offer, to man is — fate.

Now it happened that all the accumulated ideals and interests of life were conceived to hang on the undisputed assumption that reason was the very framework of the universe. Consciously, or unconsciously, that was the basis on which the Western world had built its civilization, its moral standards, its religion, its literature, and its art. As the bearer of evil tidings, Schopenhauer repudiated this basic assumption and seemed to take grim pleasure in the pessimistic outcome of his philosophy. Life has no meaning, he held, beyond the range of its immediate concerns. 'Humanity,' 'civilization,' and 'progress' are unwarranted fictions, for they imply a rational direction, if not a goal, of life. There can be neither history of man nor of the world, for history implies threads of purpose running through and giving unity to the universe. Moreover, there was for him no common human task, no summons to achieve a common good, no sustaining hope for a larger and freer life growing out of the labors of past and present, and, of course, there was no hope of life beyond the grave. His was a desperately short and meager creed, but Schopenhauer was satisfied to have it so. 'My philosophy,' he admitted, 'has never brought me anything in, but it has spared me very much.' Where one expects no good, he is at least spared disappointment. Following the maxim of Epicurus, Schopenhauer sought consolation in himself alone, in his own emancipated thoughts and feelings, untouched by the stupidities of others and free from the noise and confusion of the toiling world. 'A chief lesson of youth,' he said, 'should be to learn to enjoy solitude —

the source of peace and happiness.' This became his own life-program after he failed as university instructor. With a small but adequate income from his father's estate, Schopenhauer established himself comfortably in his quarters at Frankfort to enjoy his leisure during the years of waiting for his philosophy to be recognized. But in his search for happiness he was only moderately successful, even when he sought relief from boredom in art. Wholly self-centered and irritable, stirred by his colossal egotism and hunger for praise, he saw his peace and happiness fly out of the window when the works of others were given the recognition he craved for his own. The paucity of his philosophic creed could not be disguised at such times. Fichte would be assailed as a mere 'windbag,' Hegel was only an 'inspired sheep,' Lotze's *Medizinische Psychologie,* the first of the physiological psychologies, was a mere 'worthless compilation,' and even the work of Helmholz, as compared with his own, was as a mole-hill compared with Mont Blanc.

There was, however, one ray of light in the gloomy picture of life drawn by Schopenhauer, and that has been generously appreciated, especially by artists. There are moments of æsthetic enjoyment in our lives when a mood is awakened in us, that, for the time, makes us completely forget ourselves and our surroundings. We are lifted out of the time-stream of actual existence, and seem to drift in a world of pure sense-imagery. Artistic contemplation is able to produce such moods, and Schopenhauer hails this fact as giving the clue to the real mission of art in life. It makes us forget the stupidities of life, and opens up a way of escape from the struggle of existence, which is the inexorable law of life. Æsthetic experience is pure, disinterested enjoyment, free from the craving and striving of the will-principle in us, and, therefore, Schopenhauer gives it important recognition in his system. Art has no truth to communicate, he admitted; it is not one of the modes of revealing eternal reality, as Hegel had supposed. But it does have a unique functional value, for while it cannot break the power of the ' will to live,' it furnishes us a temporary refuge from its torments. Music, especially, has this power of bringing us relief, and was the most prized of all the arts. But, at best, it was a palliative, not a cure, of the ills of life.

One would suppose that the logical way out from this sorry scheme of things would be suicide, but Schopenhauer would not have it so. On the subject of suicide he became mystic, lost in the metaphysics of Hinduism, and the reasons he gave for rejecting the way out would be far from convincing to one who was actually suffering from the world's ills that Schopenhauer only imagined. After all, he might reason, life is an individual affair on Schopenhauer's own showing, and a poor investment at best, so why should not the bankrupt take the cash and let the credit go? Schopenhauer argued that release should come, not by taking one's life, but by renouncing the will-to-live, by letting the will-principle in us slowly starve itself to death. How this could be done was a mystery, seeing that the will-principle is the one reality in the universe. But, said Schopenhauer, the lives of the saints of all ages prove that this complete emancipation is possible, a fact which suggests the operation of a transcendent factor. Life is an evil dream; deny the will-to-dream, renounce all dreaming, and one awakes to a tranquil state, untroubled by craving and self-seeking. Buddha and his followers sought and found this state of blessedness in Nirvana. The Christian mystics, Schopenhauer pointed out, found their peace in religious contemplation. At this point Schopenhauer's theory of life blossoms out in all the moral idealism of the unselfish life. The law of love and good-will should rule. One should be kindly disposed and merciful, returning good for evil, seeking nothing for oneself. It was high doctrine, and familiar doctrine, too, but one is at a loss to know how he derived it from the basic premise of his system. If blind, irrational force is the one ultimate reality, from which all else proceeds, it is a bit difficult to understand how the moral virtues of universal love and good-will come to blossom at the top.

Schopenhauer was not troubled by his inconsistencies, whether in his philosophy or in his life. Feeling played a preponderating role in his thinking and in his conduct. His conclusions were not reached by detached, impartial thinking; they came by flashes of intuition. That was both his strength and his weakness. He was a gifted, but a one-sided genius. In a moral sense, he was not a robust soul. Self-denial and self-forgetting service for others was the crown of life in his system, but these virtues did not point the way of the good life which Schopenhauer chose for himself. This was because Schopenhauer's moral idealism was really æsthetic at the root. He was fully aware of his temperamental bias, that he sought confirmation for his views rather than proofs, and that his practice did not conform to his published views.

In spite of his one-sided treatment of the life-problem, and the inconsistencies in his system, Schopenhauer was one of the dominant factors in shaping the course of reflective thought in the latter half of the century. He instituted the long-due successful revolt against intellectualism in philosophy, which turned loose the flood of voluntarisms, vitalisms, functionalisms, and pragmatisms that have found such favor in recent years. He gave philosophy a new conception of life, and made it the organizing center of his own system. But it was not life in the well-known valuational sense that he had in mind; rather it was the biological sense as life-process. In method, he reversed the Aristotelian order of explanation, holding that the interests of human life are not to be rightly understood from the point of view of their outcome, but from the point of view of their origin.

Schopenhauer's irrationalism logically begins at this point. If the mental life is nothing more than up-trained instinct, then conceptual thought is only one of the modes of biological functioning. Although it has attained to the plane of consciousness it has nothing unique to offer, and consequently the peculiar claims of reason in life fall away. Fichte had saved his voluntarism from that collapse by postulating the rationality of his creative principle. Schopenhauer held that life and all its far-reaching interests are a part of nature, and are therefore to be explained wholly from below. Anyone who would interpret them from above was a mere ' windbag ' or an ' inspired sheep.'

When he referred to philosophy's traditional handling of the problem of evil, Schopenhauer's scorn knew no bounds. For centuries, rationalism had ' explained ' the seamy side of existence in a good world by virtually explaining it away. Evil was conceived to be merely a lower stage in the evolving world-process which as a whole is good, or the necessary background of the cosmic picture which serves by contrast to heighten the artistic effect of the whole, or the obstacle to virtue whose overcoming is necessary to the achieving of moral character.

Schopenhauer's contempt for the rationalist's ' solution ' of the problem served a good purpose; but there was more in the situation facing him than he saw or was capable of appreciating. Life meant more in the nineteenth century than it did when these theories of evil were formulated, and science was just beginning the work of ameliorating the human situation. Evils due to ignorance and wrong-headedness were about to give way before the volume of scientific knowledge. Inventions and discoveries were beginning to put a new face to nature and a new meaning to man's place in the world. The revolt of Schopenhauer virtually involved the broadening and deepening of the whole range of life and the stimulating of man's creative energies.

In spite of his obvious limitations, Schopenhauer was a highly suggestive thinker, and by the middle of the century the Western world was ready for his contribution. The tradition of intellectualism was on the defensive before a growing tendency to recognize the primacy of will, or action of some sort, as explaining principle in philosophy. The easy optimism of both theologian and idealistic philosopher in the face of the stubborn facts of evil was rapidly losing its hold on the popular mind. The biological approach to problems of the mental life was catching the imagination of thinkers in all the mental sciences, especially after Darwin. Thus, when Schopenhauer spoke, the Western world was well on its way toward a naturalistic view of life and its problems, and his influence as a thinker was wholly in that direction.

Nietzsche's claim to the title of philosopher rested solely on his conception of life in which he attempted a complete revolution in human thinking. It was not a reasoned conception that he offered, for his poetical temperament spurned all logical standards and methods in reaching his conclusions. He had no system; he was concerned with one idea and its practical applications only. In all his thinking he was deliberately unhistorical: what has a free mind to do with the past! Life itself is its own source and validating ground of belief, and each individual life is its own inexhaustible, ever-present well of inspiration. It is the inalienable right of those who truly live — those worthy souls who feel within their unspent power — to create out of themselves their own present and their own future, and meet every need of life. Any acknowledgment of authority beyond one's own self would involve one in slavery to what is alien to his own nature, and would be subversive to his own good. For each individual is unique, and his life must not be marred by slavish imitation and conformity. This was, indeed, extreme individualism, but it was an ethical individualism that revolted at the cheapness and meanness in the current conceptions of human destiny and at the petty virtues and vices that were socially approved. In his fashion, Nietzsche was a prophet of a new age and of a new scheme of values for life, and his importance for philosophy rests on his contribution to the present-day tendencies. The value of these contributions did not lie in the consistent formulation of what he saw and felt, but, rather, in the stimulating, poetic way in which he suggested what he had in mind. As one not-unfriendly interpreter of his philosophy has expressed it, his writings have an intriguing charm that often makes his style even more convincing than his ideas. To which, Nietzsche, as a good anti-intellectualist, would probably have retorted: what has ' being convinced ' to do with ' ideas '?

Nietzsche's mental history was characterized by three well-marked stages, each new stage breaking sharply with the one it followed. His definitive views are therefore found only in the writings of his last period. In his early period Nietzsche is the poet and artist, caught by the romantic motive in Schopenhauer's philosophy. At this time, Richard Wagner was his mentor, his model and friend. They agreed that each in his own way was giving expression to the same conception of life. But Nietzsche soon learned that Wagner's mind was moving in another direction, and that, for himself, intellectual independence was the only way to the truly free life. Speaking at a later period of Wagner's influence on his early writings, he said: 'Wagner was only one of my diseases. The metaphysical cloud enveloping all that is true and simple, the attempt to see a wonder and a portent in everything, and the corresponding baroque art of exaggeration and glorified restraint, — I mean the art of Wagner.'

Nietzsche broke the romantic spell when he made the discovery that art is not the vaunted revealer of truth, but that it simply weaves a spell that beclouds the real issues and enables unwarranted fictions to pass for realities. The second stage of his intellectual development, which now begins, was marked by a passion for the concrete and the individual, and by a growing distaste for the mystical in every form. This second period was of short duration, but it served its purpose. Nietzsche came out of it the completely disillusioned thinker, with a positive theory of life that fully met his needs. Every shred of metaphysics disappeared from his mind. Schopenhauer's cosmic will becomes merely the individual will which was identical with instinctive tendency. It alone is the one known creative agency, and its authority is final. The one great fact of life is will-instinct, and since life is through and through instinctive, life is essentially good. For 'everything good is instinct.' His early pessimism, borrowed from Schopenhauer, disappeared never to return, and a strange new optimism takes its place. Life is destined to move out unhampered in the direction determined by instinctive impulse, and all life's values are the subjective values of satisfaction in self-fulfilment. The business of the philosopher, then, is to turn his back on all the vagaries of metaphysical speculation, to acquaint himself with the life-process itself, seeking to learn what its structural logic implies, and accepting its dictates as final for thought and conduct. The individual person is found by introspection to be a compact mass of habits and attitudes, a living bundle of motor-tendencies, which are, in the last analysis, biological functions of the organism. The conscious life of the individual, with its varied interests and ideals, takes character and direction from these organic tendencies. There is no immortal soul, no inner rational principle, unfolding its meaning in the individual's life, and giving coherence and pattern to his experience. Whatever inner unity the individual life achieves is merely the functional unity of organized instinct. Individual lives differ because the formulas of their instinctive and habitual dispositions differ. But for each individual, his own peculiar formula, his unique and unsharable individuality, is his one absolute possession, and it should be held sacred and inviolable.

Away, then, with the dead hand of the past, and away with the hampering influences of tradition, custom, and conventionality. By what authority do the ideals and standards of former days and of alien minds lord it over our lives? How can the so-called eternal values and absolute truths of morality and of religion validate their claims in the face of the immediately felt sacredness of one's own life-impulses? It is vain to claim they have the assumed higher authority of reason or of revelation, for the origin of these vaunted sanctions prove that they are human — all too human. The instinct of self-preservation is the cardinal instinct of every organic being. Life itself is the Will to Power.

When, in his young manhood, Nietzsche first read the *World as Will and Idea,* he was charmed by Schopenhauer's candor and naturalness, and his confidence in him, as he afterwards confessed, was full and entire. But two such diverse minds could not continue as allies except on negative points. Both were by temperament and conviction anti-intellectualists: for them will and will alone plumbed the depths of life. Both were determined irrationalists, disillusioned idealists, although neither was able to maintain this position with strict consistency. Both agreed that the world was chaos, without meaning, purpose, or outcome, but, in Nietzsche's view, chaos offered the challenge to create order and meaning. ' Ye must have chaos within you before ye can give birth to a star.' Schopenhauer's philosophy echoes with the bitter complaint that life is full of misery and unhappiness, but Nietzsche, seeing all the misery and stupidity that Schopenhauer saw, held that freedom, not happiness, is life's true good, and that only weakness and cowardice complains. ' My suffering and my fellow-suffering, what do they matter! Do I strive after happiness? I strive after my work.' Possibly, as Leibniz had said, pain and disappointment exist to make the most of us. ' Human beings were born to conquer, not to be secure.' The whole matter is then summed up in few words which give the essence of his credo. ' What is good? All that elevates the sense of power, the will to power, and power itself. What is bad? All that proceeds from weakness.'

In developing these ideas, Nietzsche carried on a destructive criticism of modern civilization and of all reverence for its faiths and its institutions. His thesis was that everything should be subordinated to life: only the law discoverable in *living* it has absolute and universal validity. Even when one discovers the ideal which fully meets his own need, he should not insist that it become the universal ideal for all. Especially should one be on his guard against accepting ideas and creeds as more than what others have thought and believed. Even one's own ideas and beliefs, except as giving objective form to living thought, are but dead symbols. Everything static and institutional is dead, and to commit one's ways to the authority and the guidance of any institution means decadence. Intellect is the servant and not the master of life and should be kept in its place.

Led by this biological emphasis, it was not difficult for Nietzsche to find decadence in all the institutional forms of human life. These checked the free self-expression and creativity of the individual. Civilization sets store by the *status quo* and teaches men to prize prudence and safety and comfort at the expense of manliness and heroic achievements. Its mass standards produce mediocrity, and, in the end, the sense that life is cheap and drab. The ' splendid blond beast ' is indeed tamed, but his will to power and to pre-eminence is destroyed. He stigmatized the moral consciousness of the present day, both its ideals and its codes, as contrary to the nature of man, offering in its place a morality which justified the fit and the strong to exercise their power without let or hindrance from the weak and the unfit who may be injured thereby. The only right is the right to survive in the struggle of life, to rise above restrictions and surmount obstacles, and only the strong have that right, because they are strong. No individual has a right to a consideration that he has not won by his own courage and strength. The weak ought to go down in the struggle for existence, just because they are not fit to survive. This is not intentional cruelty; it is simply nature's law, which man accepts for every mode of existence except himself, and, in consequence, perpetuates the unfit and the ignoble, who breed and people the earth with their kind at the expense of the fit and the strong. Is the farmer careful to save his poor seed, and does the breeder mix scrubs with his thoroughbreds? The human enterprise calls for the brave and the heroic, and human life cannot be ennobled through cowards and weaklings. ' The history of the struggle of morality with the fundamental instincts of life is in itself the greatest piece of immorality that has ever been witnessed on earth. . . . Deliberately to thwart the law of selection among species and their natural means of purging their stock of degenerate members; this, up to my time, had been the greatest of the virtues.' This was Nietzsche's ' immoralism.' It was strong doctrine, even in the age of Darwin and Galton.

The conventional ideas of right and wrong, which Nietzsche despised, originated and found sanction in the efforts of the weak and unfit to build a barrier between themselves and the more virile and aggressive. Unable to maintain themselves by their own efforts, they perpetrated the notions of pity and sympathy, of brotherly kindness, love, and good-will, and, because the weak greatly outnumbered the strong, they won the acceptance of these notions as cardinal virtues, and the marks of the truly noble soul. Nietzsche called this 'slave morality,' and the result of its teaching was that the timid, the stupid, the lazy, and the complacent clog the thoroughfares of life, and make life cheap and drab. The true goal of human existence can be attained only through a better breed of men; it is man's task to produce by his own struggles a race of heroes, possibly a type above his own. 'All things hitherto have created something beyond themselves. . . . Ye have made your way from the worm to man, and much within you is still worm. Once ye were apes, and even yet man is more of an ape than any of the apes. Lo, I teach you the Superman! The Superman is the teaching of the earth. . . . Man is something that is to be surpassed. What have ye done to surpass man? '

One finds no difficulty in understanding Nietzsche's condemnation of Christianity, with its otherworldly spirit and its stress on the milder, self-abnegating virtues. He recognized, indeed, 'that Christianity had become something fundamentally different from what its Founder wished it to be,' and yet he did not deny that the teaching of Jesus about life was diametrically opposed to his own. Jesus would curb and fashion instinctive life in a heavenly pattern according to a divine order; Nietzsche held it better to 'let nature take its own course, only embellishing and trimming a little here and there' (on what authority and by what standards he did not say), or 'we may allow instincts to spring up according to their own natural growth and limitations, and fight out their battle among themselves, nay, we may even take delight in such chaos — though we may possibly have a hard time of it.'

Consistent with these views was his repudiation of the inviolable sacredness of human personality and its correlated doctrine of the equality of men. ' O, ye preachers of equality,' cries Zarathustra, ' ye are tarantulae. Therefore do I tear at your web that your revenge may leap forth from behind your word " justice." Unto *me,* justice saith, " men are not equal. Neither shall they become so." '

One misses the point in interpreting Nietzsche who fails to see the underlying motive of his contempt for the institutions of modern culture was the insincerity and pretence that they fostered in the lives of men. His life was one long revolt at what he conceived to be the causes of its moral decadence. To him one honest oath was worth more than a lifetime of pious ' uplifting.' ' What is more harmful than any crime? ' he asks, and his answer is, ' practical sympathy for all the defective and weak.'

In summing up the net results of Nietzsche's philosophy of life it is obvious that the man's personal equation greatly overplayed its role. Much that he wrote that startles and astounds is no concern of philosophy. He was by his own admission a genius with a message, and he scorned the arts of orderly thought and persuasion. His epigrammatic brilliance and his undoubted skill in the dithyrambic form of utterance marked him as a lyrical and enthusiastic propagandist of a new conception of life rather than its expositor. Temperament colored and sometimes distorted his teachings, and it has been responsible for some of his interpreters being miles apart. His hatred of shams and pretence often created in him more heat than light, and warped his judgment on some of the cardinal points of his doctrine. But neither the novelty of his point of view nor his consummate literary art explains the amazing influence of his ideas in Europe and America during the past fifty years. In spite of his exaggerations he was an effective spokesman of one of the leading forces in the modern world.

In the field of speculative thought from the age of Socrates down to the middle of the nineteenth century, the Platonic tradition had been a dominant factor in shaping the thought and the institutions of Western civilization. The universal was held to be intelligible through and through; truth and righteousness were believed to have their roots in the objective order, and that life's good takes the pattern of an eternal purpose. But how to get these assumptions, together with their far-reaching implications, into a self-consistent formula, and interpret it to meet the needs of expanding life had been the ceaseless task of the intervening centuries. In his doctrine of the organizing and creative activity of the mind, Kant had given a new impetus to idealistic speculation, and in the early decades of the century many had hopes that philosophy's labors would soon be crowned with success. But the long-delayed revolt against intellectualism and against all forms of rationalism, reinforced by the rising tide of scientific interest, soon made it clear that the day of naturalism was at hand, and that henceforth idealism was to be put on the defence. As thinkers Schopenhauer and Nietzsche were important as heralds of the new point of view, rather than as interpreters. Life, not conceptual thought, imagination, or feeling, was to be the ultimate term to which all problems were to be brought for solution. Life, especially in the biological sense, was proposed as the least common denominator, to which all issues should be reduced in order to meet them aright. But life is a very flexible term, and, in consequence, many variant forms of this thesis have appeared, and under various names: voluntarism, vitalism, functionalism, activism, pragmatism, behaviorism, with several attempts to graft idealism on the voluntaristic stem. But the possibilities of the voluntaristic thesis have yet to be fully explored. Whether it can furnish an interpretation of the human situation that meets the demands of life, remains for the future to show.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE AT THE CROSSROADS

> *What then can help us on our way? One thing and one thing alone, philosophy; which is to keep the spirit within us inviolate and free from scathe. — The philosopher's school, ye men should take notice, is a surgical clinic; you ought not to expect to go out pleased, but cured.*
>
> MARCUS AURELIUS

To admit that philosophy is always outgrowing its systems and never reaches a formula that permanently satisfies, is only another way of saying that reflective thought ever seeks in its hypotheses to keep up with growing culture and civilization. It means that life is ever deepening and expanding its interests, and is, consequently, always breaking over the limits set by every attempt to formulate what it most deeply feels and seeks to understand. And when a new age is breaking in on a people's thought and life, a deeper principle alone can hold the gains already won and fuse them with the new meanings and values.

After the middle of the nineteenth century the authority of great speculative systems gave place to widespread distrust of all efforts to gain a synoptic view of things. The intellectual mood of the time was to hold close to facts and to find out, as well as one might, how things really stand in the world we live in. Toward the close of the century it became increasingly evident in many fields of culture, that the Platonic tradition was gradually losing its hold on the modern mind, and that reflective thought was entering upon an era of naturalism.

Not so in England, however. Although long a favorite subject for students of literature in the English universities, Plato's idealism, up to the middle of the century, had made little headway as against the empirical trend of thought instituted by Hobbes, Bacon, and Locke. As Adam Seth once expressed it, the British mind had been slow to distinguish the philosophical from the psychological method of thinking, and was inclined to believe it had established the validity of an idea when it had shown the way the idea arises in the mind.

But at the time that Kantian and post-Kantian idealism was going into eclipse in Germany, Coleridge and Carlyle, inspired by transcendentalism, were beginning to make effective appeals to the idealism in English blood that had been kept alive by the spiritual reality in art, morality, and religion. Their appeals were rendered more effective through their contact with men and movements in Germany, especially by their acquaintance with the works of Goethe and Schiller and the philosophies of Kant and Fichte. As opposed to the empirical tradition in England, they held that philosophy's business was not to explain but to interpret. They held that it should begin with what gives distinction and uniqueness to human life, and that the most distinctive thing about life on the human plane are the ideal values, which are the media through which transcendent meanings are brought home to us. It is in our appreciation of beauty, they held, in our reverences, in our instinctive response to the call of duty, and in our faith that good is deeply rooted in the very nature of things that lifts the human above the merely animal plane. These ideas took hold in the popular mind and found frequent and varied expression, when, in the 'sixties and 'seventies, Tennyson, Browning, and Matthew Arnold — the latter with a difference — were the recognized poets of the idealistic view of life. In the Victorian era it was easy to believe that the spirit of man is the candle of the Lord, and that the inspiration of the Almighty gives him understanding. About this time, idealism as a philosophy established itself in the English and Scottish universities, finding systematic expression in the works of James Hutchinson Stirling, Thomas Hill Green, Edward Caird, and F. H. Bradley, and later Bernard Bosanquet and a score of other speculative idealists. From the point of view of a philosophy of life, some of these thinkers were of first importance, but none of the systems was as important as was their common emphasis on the primacy of mind in the constitution of the universe and the rational nature of human life and its essential interests.

But on the continent, the connection between the people's needs and their reflective tendencies came to expression in the political and economic ferment of the time. The age of radical economic thinkers was beginning. For a long time the material concerns of the people had suffered at the hands of monarchs and bureaucrats, and democratic ideas were finding favor among the people of western Europe. In the difficult years that followed the Napoleonic wars, down through the middle decades of the century, poverty of the people and agricultural and industrial crises caused their full share of human misery on the continent as they did in England. But, while in England relief was sought in reform movements and acts of Parliament, the situation on the continent gave rise to revolutionary ideas and outbreaks. Economic theories and practices that had grown up in a simpler age became intolerably oppressive to artizan and peasant alike in the changed conditions of nineteenth century industrialism. Proudhon, Bakunin, Lassalle, Rodbertus, Marx, and many others, each in his own way, sought to revolutionize the whole structure of the economic life in the interest of justice and equality. Gradually, throughout the latter half of the century and into the twentieth century, the emphases of thought and life shifted from the interests of the inner life, with its imponderable and intangible values, to the measurable values of our material concerns. Led by economic thinkers such as J. S. Mill, Henry George, and the socialists Rodbertus, Marx, and Lassalle, people adjusted their thinking to the questions of property rights, economic values, capital and labor, *laissez-faire,* and controlled economy. Following the trend of the natural sciences, the social sciences — history, politics, economics, sociology, anthropology, and even ethics — became scientific in method and aim in the search for exact knowledge and predictive certainties. By the close of the century, the culture of the Western world was well on its way toward becoming thoroughly mechanized. The modern mind had largely outgrown — for the time at least — its interest in interpretation, and was concerned with matters of explanation alone.

But not wholly so. Theoretical scientists like Liebig balked at materialism as a conception of nature and reproached German scientists who favored this conception for their lack of critical and historical sense. None of the great discoveries in science were made by materialists, he said, but by scientists who were led by the philosopher's sense of the whole of things. Friederich Albrecht Lange developed this thought to its logical conclusion.

Any reflective mind, he held, ought to see that all natural science, when true to its own method, is analytical and clings to the particular. The scientist who has a theory of nature has it by virtue of the philosophy that is in him. Science, indeed, cannot close the circle of its own system without borrowing from idealism. Moreover, he continued, materialism is further objectionable on ethical grounds. It distorts our sense of reality, and every falsification of reality attacks the bases of our spiritual existence, which is a concern for the scientist as it is for other men. But the most significant defence of the integrity of the spiritual values of life, as against the invasion of mechanistic conceptions, was made by Hermann Lotze. His defence was grounded on a broader base, and was carried out in systematic completeness. Lotze had the advantage, not only of native aptitude and training in natural science as well as in philosophy, but also, as he tells us, his æsthetic appreciations in art and poetry which first led him to the study of philosophy were determining motives in shaping his philosophy of life. As Santayana once pointed out, Lotze as a scientist never left the demands of sentiment out of view when he formulated natural laws, or natural laws when he formulated the demands of sentiment.

As a scientific hypothesis, valid only in the domain of science, Lotze frankly accepted the mechanistic explanation of nature, but he was too acute as philosopher not to see that the whole framework of science rests on presuppositions that lie far beyond the reach of scientific explanation. Science must accept and build on these presuppositions but is unable to explain their origin or follow the logic of their implications. How shall we explain the assumed order and intelligibility of nature's processes which scientific procedure presupposes and must presuppose? Do events in the physical universe happen by chance? Are they the outcome of blind, mechanical necessity? Or shall we think of them as expressions of intelligent, cosmic purpose, the manifestations in the phenomenal world of a Cosmic Mind? Which is the more reasonable hypothesis: intelligence or non-intelligence as the source and ground of order and intelligibility in nature, and of intelligence in man? Is what we know of our world and of our own mental processes better explained by reference to an intelligent Will as their ultimate source, or to a mechanistic necessity? Lotze held that in framing the answers to these questions, the logic of conceptual thought was not entitled to be considered alone, but the logic of life in all its varied modes of manifestation, including conscience, the emotions, the moral sentiments, and the ideal of beauty as well as of truth. On his belief in the solidarity of all the mind's essential interests he based what he called his teleological idealism, which became the pattern of what became widely known as theistic idealism. In America it has also been called Personalism.

'Between spiritual needs and the results of human science there is an unsettled dispute of long standing.' In these words which opened the popular exposition of his system, Lotze indicated the aim of his speculative labors was to harmonize the intellectual demands of science and philosophy and the fundamental pieties of the heart without sacrifice of what is vital to either. As a philosopher he had no quarrel with mechanism as the method of science, even in the explanation of organic processes of the mental life, for once an organism has come into existence, then we must think that everything within it goes on mechanically. The question of origins, of values, of ultimate reality, and of meaning is one of teleology, and its consideration is the province of philosophy. To the scientist is entrusted the task of describing the course of life; to the philosopher the task of understanding it.

In the *Critique of Pure Reason* Kant confessed that his aim was to remove knowledge from its place of authority to make room for belief, and it was still his aim when, in the second Critique, he made the moral ideal the supreme law in the intellectual life. The traditional error of idealism had been its intellectualistic bias, which came to its most consistent formulation in the philosophy of Hegel. Lotze's opposition to intellectualism was as emphatic as Kant's, but his point of attack was from a different angle. The intellectual life draws its standards, its ideals, and much of its materials from the sublogical region of the feelings and desires, without which there could be no knowledge. Intellect has no independent status in the mental life; it is only the name we give to the formulating, systematizing function of the mind, and the truth which intellect seeks is only the sense of finality which we experience in the presence of the total situation envisaged in our thought. Much has been made in the past of the difference between values and validities. Validities and values are, of course, distinguishable for thought, but they are not separate in reality. For the validity which we conceive is only the value which we feel. Lotze thus took up his position between rationalistic idealism with its intellectualistic bias on the one hand, and naturalism reinforced by scientific tendencies on the other, recognizing the just claims of each in its place, but rejecting their pretensions as interpretations of life and the universe. In their place he offered an idealism which voiced the needs of life as a whole, especially the spiritual needs revealed in our aspirations and ideals, our seasons of happiness, our moral and religious faith, and our love of beauty and truth. The human personality is to us the revelation of reality, and it is the warrant for the belief in Divine Personality as the ultimate reality.

Lotze was not alone in his defence of the spiritual integrity of man as against the growing encroachments of naturalism. Fechner, Von Hartmann, and Wundt in Germany, and Ravaisson, Boutroux, and Renouvier in France, together with Croce and Gentile in Italy, despite the wide differences between their respective systems, found common ground in their vigorous opposition to the invasion of the scientific method into the domain of the humanities. Against the naturalistic drift of the times, they held that the interests and achievements of the inner life have a reality of their own not to be forgotten or despised in the belated enthusiasm over the fruitful progress of the ' exact ' sciences. But in the closing decades of the nineteenth century and down to the beginning of the World War, it was Rudolph Eucken who raised anew the banner of idealism against the dangers to civilization threatened by the ' powers of mechanism.' ' Its triumphal progress,' he said, ' has not implied a simultaneous advancement of the inner life; its dazzling victories have not been won for the spirit and substance of man. With relentless energy, it has driven us more and more exclusively upon the world without us, subduing us to its necessities, pressing us more and more closely into the service of our environment.' And then, as if foreseeing the impending disaster so soon to fall upon the Western world, he continued: ‘Inflated with success, yet we find ourselves empty and poor. We have become the mere tools and instruments of an impersonal civilization which first uses us, and then forsakes us, the victims of a power as pitiless as it is inhuman, which rides rough-shod over nations and individuals alike, ruthless alike of life or death, knowing neither plan nor reason, void of all love or care for man.’

In Eucken we see the spiritually minded man condemned to live in an age of science which cramps and stifles what he feels life most deeply means to him. He saw the civilization of his time drifting toward a one-sided emphasis on material concerns, thereby throwing life out of balance. He saw environment being used, not to call forth the creative energies within in behalf of a fuller, richer life, but as means for determining what life really is, what its objectives should be, and what rewards it could hope for. Life, he said, was being measured in terms of thing-values. It was the age-old conflict over the supremacy of the world of nature or of the world of spirit. Does nature define the limits of reality, and is the spirit in man a mere by-product? Or is spirit of the essence of reality, and is nature the form which it takes in the perception and thought of the finite mind?

For Eucken, the answer to this question was not far to seek. Ultimate reality is the spiritual world; that conviction alone brings unity into our thought about life and the universe, and upon it hangs all our hope of good. Nor is the conviction based on mere assumption. The one given fact that we know is the reality of the spiritual life in us. ‘*Es giebt das Geistesleben!*’ That was the cornerstone of his philosophy. It lives in the consciousness and in the deeds of mankind, and shows itself in struggle for inner unity and freedom as against the disharmonies of human existence. It lives in the individual in every creative impulse, in the aspirations and ideals and the ceaseless efforts to achieve them in art, in religion, in the intellectual and social life, and in self-realization. Reality, in Eucken's thought, is Actuality (*Wirklichkeit*) : it is the active, creative principle of our being, and is the ground of all meaning and value.

Eucken's philosophy was a summons to experience reality in the creative activities of the spirit and not trust the vain hope of expressing it in terms of conceptual thought. What the intellect formulates becomes fixed, static, relative. But spirit is life, movement, ceaselessly renewing itself.

In Eucken's activism, German idealism of the nineteenth century reached its culmination. Possibly the most fruitful development in philosophy during this period grew out of the suggestion of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, that will is the dominant principle in the mental life, and that, in consequence, it furnishes the natural approach to the understanding of the human problem. Eucken's Activism, reminiscent of Fichte's ethical idealism, was speculative throughout, and, consequently, he gave scant recognition to the psychological aspect of experience. The basic categories of this new philosophy of will were psychological — psychological in the modern biological sense. The living organism with its native needs and impulses was taken as the basic fact, and conscious thinking intervenes only when organic tendencies are obstructed and satisfaction of needs is threatened. Thinking was thus conceived essentially as an operation in which the whole organism is active. When we think the whole conscious organism is confronted by some situation that requires manipulation to make it serve our ends. Thus, to think is to select and reject, to divide and combine, to frame hypotheses and imaginary situations, and all in the interest of the futherance of life. It is not the high soaring thing of the intellectualist's creed, but is a practical affair whose value is functional only.

The ample possibilities of these novel suggestions were widely exploited toward the turn of the century and gave rise to a variety of movements known under various names, of which vitalism, voluntarism, pragmatism, and instrumentalism are the better known. Differing among themselves on many points, they nevertheless united in common opposition to the age-long tradition of intellectualism, and in their vigorous assent to the conception of mind as operative, functional, and behavioristic. What each offered was obviously a philosophy for an age of science.

In each of these movements, philosophical terms took on a dominantly biological connotation. Thus, a problem was conceived as the awareness of some impeded function of the human organism, and thinking as the mode of behavior employed in seeking the proper organic adjustment. If instrumentalism should be permitted to speak for these movements, the story of philosophy would run somewhat on this wise: The life of human intelligence is meaning, and meaning is, primarily, a property of behavior, and, secondarily, an attributed property of objects. It constitutes the intelligibility of acts and things. The behavior is, of course, the behavior of the organism. There is nothing else to which behavior can be referred. The organism as a whole, including internal organs, the muscular system, etc., is concerned to some extent and in some fashion in every thought and act. Thinking is one of the modes of organic behavior, and its significance or meaning is the consummation or outcome which it intends. Mind denotes the whole system of meanings as they are embodied in the workings of organic life. Much of this meaning is at any one time implicit, or, as we say, subconscious, for the field of the mind is enormously wider than the field of consciousness. But these implicit meanings must not be conceived statically as reserved data. They exist, rather, in the form of habits and attitudes, which are motor-tendencies always on the point of emerging in action. All habits and attitudes are just so many demands for certain kinds of action. Taken together in the unity of the mental organism, they constitute the self. As grounds for choice, decision, action, they are what we know as will. They form our effective desires and they furnish us our working capacities. They determine the individual's mental horizon, and, consequently, his outlook on life, as well.

Habit is, thus, the central clue to the instrumental conception of the mental life. Perception itself is a habit. What the eyes and the ears and the other sense-organs give us do not, of themselves, make percepts. One perceives what he is prepared to perceive, and prepared at the moment to perceive, for perceiving is a pattern-giving process, which every one has discovered who has tried to perceive the hidden object in a puzzle-picture. Understanding is a habit, for to be understood a thing must be seen in the light of one's organized past experience. Intellectual development is the slow process of habit-formation of the sort known as the acquisition of meaning-patterns. Appreciation is a habit, so is belief.

Every habit creates an unconscious expectation and prepares the way for faith. Every attitude is a working hypothesis in germ, ready to verify itself in act. Science itself is incarnate in every attitude that we take toward the world about us, and moral theory is incorporated in all our relations with our fellow men.

So matters stood at the turn of the century. The world's greatest epoch in human enterprise, chiefly in the direction of material interests, had just drawn to a close, and a greater one lay just ahead. But the gains were not on the side of the balanced, well-ordered life. Expanding life, following the rapid growth of discoveries and inventions, was setting a pace too fast for the more deliberate movements of reflective thought. Thus, the twentieth century began with a one-sided emphasis on material concerns, which was to have far-reaching spiritual consequences in the years that followed. No new philosophy appeared that was able to keep balance and perspective among the divergent intellectual interests of the times. No integrating principle was at hand that was capable of bringing unity and coherence into the conflicting tendencies, and of conserving the values of the inner life as well. As the new century advanced the spirit of science continued to diffuse itself throughout all departments of thought and life, extending the frontiers of knowledge and opening new fields of adventure. The so-called mental sciences were reorganized, first in terms of physical categories, and then in those of biology. The popular mind of the Western world was gradually becoming mechanized and materialistic.

There was a growing impatience at traditionalism, and in the eagerness for new modes of thought and behavior, it puzzled many to know what to do with the past and some of its institutions. In revolt against the restraints of custom, there was a growing demand for social and economic justice, in shop and mill and factory, in the law courts and political institutions. New energies were released to discover and invent new ways of bringing the forces of nature to bear on the problem of more efficient living. The story of the marvelous achievements of the nineteenth century has been told and retold, and the story is well worth repeating. But the story ends without recording a corresponding increase of appreciation of the comparative values of the various fields of knowledge, of endeavor, and of the imponderable interests of life.

Shaken in its confidence in some of its ideals, and somewhat bewildered in its beliefs and loyalties, the Western mind at the close of the nineteenth century was not as naïve and as submissive as it was at the beginning. There had awakened in the individual a deeper sense of his rights and possibilities as a person, and his mental horizon had been lifted, more particularly on the side of life's contacts with physical nature. But in the absence of a corresponding deepening of reverence for the things that give sacredness to human rights, and with the weakening of the common faith that, in the end, right alone gives might, a day of reckoning for Western civilization could not be far distant. For its security, and to conserve the hard-earned gains of the past, society, as well as the individual, needed a philosophy to live by.

It is, and always has been, a matter of common knowledge, that reason roots deep in human nature, and has been assumed to have its counterpart in the workings of physical nature. Moreover, the basic postulate of human intelligence, on which our civilization rests, is that all our hope for good, for the present and for the future, lies in the keeping of reason, which gives law to life and all its concerns. The rule of unreason has always brought caprice, discord, and chaos. Devoid of plan or purpose, it departs from every norm on which the interests of the good life depend. Every step man has taken in the long journey in the search for peace and happiness has been over obstacles of unreason within himself and in the world without. Morality, religion, philosophy, and even science [1] — each in its own way — have made common cause against it. Human life advances only by trampling it underfoot; yet unreason is never destroyed. When driven out through the door, it finds ways of coming back through the windows.

To philosophy, the presence of unreason in a world assumed to be grounded in law and order has been felt both a challenge and a defiance, more grievous to be borne because there is so little to be done about it. Since the facts of unreason cannot be denied, the problem of life, as philosophy conceived it, is to hold it in abeyance, to nullify its influence and to give it no part in the ultimate interpretation of the world. To discover the universal in the particular, the 'soul of goodness in things evil,' and law and order everywhere, has been philosophy's self-imposed task since the days of Socrates. The problem of evil has been its most stubborn problem. It has proposed many theodicies to solve the problem, but, somehow, the problem never stayed solved. One solution conceived the facts of evil as the dissonance that heightens the universal harmonies of life. Another saw in the drab, meaningless details of human existence the necessary background over against which the central figure is projected, which gives unity to the picture. Still another thinker likened the facts of evil to the sordid episodes and tragic situations round which the plot turns which lends color and sustaining interest to the story. What would the Iliad be without the unseemly quarrel of Agamemnon and Achilles over Briseis, and what would have happened to the tragedy of Hamlet, if the queen and her husband's brother had not been wanting in virtue and honor? Then there was the suggestion of Epictetus, that men are disturbed, not by the facts of life, but by the views they take of these facts — a suggestion which Spinoza further embroidered by proposing the view that we see all things from the point of view of the eternal, when the blemishes of life will appear in their true perspective as lower forms of good. Finally, Leibniz held that the more troublesome evils grew out of man's ignorance, which was an inevitable consequence of finiteness, and took further comfort from the thought that, if virtue is to live, it must resist, and that which it resists must live. Thus, evil ceases to be the ugly fact of human existence, and becomes the one means, of all conceivable means, to make the most of us.

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[1] Science wars against unreason only within its own restricted field of interest, and only there in so far as the law of orderly sequence is ignored.

The twentieth century found the new age impatient at all such rationalizations. The facts of unreason were too many and too stubborn to be swept aside so easily. A new mental habit, already well established on the principle of naturalism, looked with suspicion on the attempts of the various half-idealisms and the half-realisms to compass the differences between Science, with its facts, and Life, with its values. The changing world had need of a more robust re-interpretation of the whole human situation — one that gave promise of saving life from losing its poise and sense of proportion when disturbed by the shocks of circumstance. Meeting this need continues to be the unfinished business of philosophy. If, as Professor Taylor contends, 'The ages in which the prospects of philosophy are brightest are just those in which a powerful historical tradition has broken down,' then the better day for philosophy, of which the new interest in the problem of values is one of the signs, may not be far ahead.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

THE DEEPENING STREAM OF LIFE

Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

PAUL

'WHEN I was young,' said Socrates in the *Phaedo,* 'I had a prodigious desire to know that department of philosophy which is called the investigation of nature. To know the causes of things, and why a thing is and is created and destroyed appeared to me to be a lofty profession.' Then Socrates proceeds to give a brief account of some of his investigations, and to tell of his surprise that, with his best endeavors, none of his explanations disclosed how things come to be, or why they are as they are. Even in so simple a matter as counting, he thought it strange that he could not explain why two should emerge when one is added to one. Somewhere in the process of counting — indeed, in the deriving of all notions of relation — there must be a determining principle, which his analysis could not discover.

Continuing the narrative of his quest for the origin of things, he tells Cebes of an incident without mentioning the attendant circumstances: 'Then I heard some one reading, as he said from a book of Anaxagoras, that mind is the disposer and cause of all, and I was delighted at this notion, which appeared quite admirable, and I said to myself: "If mind is the disposer, mind will dispose all for the best, and put each particular in its best place" . . . And I rejoiced to think that I had found in Anaxagoras a teacher of causes of existence such as I desired. . . . And I thought that when he had explained to me in detail the cause of each and the cause of all, he would go on to explain to me what was best for each and what was good for all. These hopes I would not have sold for a large sum of money, and I seized the books and read them as fast as I could in my eagerness to know the better and the worse. What expectations had I formed, and how grievously was I disappointed!'

Anaxagoras, it seems, had never realized the magnitude of his discovery, but turned aside from the notion of mind as the ultimate source and explanation of the universe, and pursued his investigations in other directions, which led to nothing. But to Socrates, this notion became the ruling thought of his life, and held the germs of all he had to offer in his teaching. If mind is the 'disposer and cause of all,' he reasoned, the world is not the alien thing it seems to be, nor can it be opaque to our inquiring thought: it is intelligible through and through, and invites us to discover its meaning in its structures and processes. He saw nature thus raised above the level of a mere aggregate, and become, for our minds, an ordered whole, and that each existence has its own discoverable place and function in the general scheme of things. More important to Socrates than all else was the thought that this scheme includes man as well as the world of things. His nature, also, has its own definite mode of being and of working, and the 'disposer' has given man's life its own proper ends, which are to be realized under conditions prescribed by his nature.

Looking back across the centuries, what do we find in these incidents that are relevant to the thought and issues of our own time? We see this man, Socrates, discovering that all things have their beginning in, and take their nature from, mind (*nous*), reason. We find him reflectively aware that his thinking spontaneously conformed to certain conditions, which were determined by his mental nature; that this thinking, so determined, prescribed certain properties and relations to the world outside that it took the character of a cosmos. We see him rejoicing in this discovery, holding it above price, for it satisfied his intellectual curiosity concerning the world in which he lived, and it gave him the clue to life's meaning as well. He discovered that the ' disposer and cause of all ' had given him a nature that not only prescribed the conditions for fruitful thinking, but subjected him to certain inner compulsions that gave rise to distinctions of value, and created for him new and difficult situations which he had to meet. Thus, he found an innate propensity to make distinctions of better and worse, right and wrong, and the like, and to set great store by these distinctions. More personal than the others, the compulsion of conscience put him under heavy responsibilities, and caused him to feel at odds with himself for any failure to meet these responsibilities. And Socrates rejoiced over all these inner determinations and compulsions. In obedience to their requirements he found peace of mind and happiness. They were not restrictions on his freedom; rather, they made possible for him the only freedom he desired, and added dignity and meaning to his life. ' Not life, but a good life is to be chiefly valued,' he said. In reviewing the conduct of his life at his trial, he summed up his defence in few words: ' My great and only care was lest I should do any unrighteous or unholy thing.' And as for abandoning his providential mission as teacher of civic righteousness, because it was annoying to his countrymen to be reminded of their faults, his sufficient reply was that necessity was laid upon him to obey the one authority he could accept as having the final word: ' Men of Athens, I honor and love you; but I shall obey God rather than you.' And rather than demean himself by cajolery of the jury or bribery of the jailor, he accepted death in good conscience, tasting the quality of life to the end.

There is nothing unique in this glimpse of history. Other men of like stamp, each in his own way, have done this sort of thing in all ages, and others will continue to do so as long as human nature is constituted as it is. And therein lies its importance for philosophy, and the reason for recalling it at this time. Something in man — something distinctive of his human quality — sets him tasks; and the meaning and value of his life, and the kind of a world he lives in, depend on the way he meets these tasks.

Man has always known that he and the animal have much in common; what man has not always known is where the animal leaves off and where human nature begins. The distinctive human quality does not lie in the possession of any one of the mental processes described by the psychologist, or of all of them; rather, it lies in man's capacity to achieve and to appreciate through the use of these processes. The animal perceives and acts in accordance with what he perceives; he experiences pleasures and pains; he feels, he has emotions, he remembers and imagines. There is no evidence, however, that he perceives the landscape or the starry heavens above, that he feels as deeply as man, that memory and imagination bring the past and the future into his present to give it perspective, or that he uses ideas *as ideas,* and thereby builds up for himself an ideal world of meaning and of value in which to find his enduring satisfactions. Moreover, on the animal plane, life gives no outward sign that it broadens with increase of knowledge and understanding, and that it deepens with growing appreciation as the generations come and go. That is why man and the animal part company where sense leaves off, and meaning begins.

Neither Anaxagoras nor Socrates developed the implications of the term ' mind ' (*nous*), yet both gave it the meaning of the term ' reason,' and Socrates, especially, made clear the directions in which those implications would appear to reflective thought. He saw that the deepest law of mind is the principle of unity; that where mind is predicated, one may expect to find order, coherence, and uniformity according to law. These are the implications that give articulateness to thought and experience — that give body and form to the intellectual life.

These formal implications — those set forth in books of logic — give the most convincing evidence of the role played by unity in the mental life, for from it stem all the conditions of correct thinking. As far as thought-structures and relations are concerned, it prescribes the very conditions of intelligence itself. We can think only under the form of the judgment, and judgment is a function of unity. To be meaningful, our experiences must be coherent, articulate. To be logically true, our thought must be consistent; for truth, whatever else it may be, is contradictionless. To be rationally significant, our actions must be brought under the rule of plan or purpose. To be responsive to our thought and action the multitude of things without must be conceived as a world of law and order, a universe. The unity of life is intrinsic, and all its functions are functions of that unity.

In the passing of the years, the term philosophy has come to have at least two meanings. What reflective thinkers have been able to descry of the human landscape from their respective points of vantage, and have succeeded in committing to writing, is one of these meanings. The long history of speculative thought is the record of philosophy's achievements in this sense. The other is the deeply rooted, ceaselessly emerging body of implicit meaning which is the very heart of life itself. It is the distinctive quality of man's nature, coming to consciousness in the reactions of his organic life to persons and things about him. He begins to act out this implicit meaning in early childhood long before he becomes aware of its shaping influence in his life. As he comes to maturity it impresses its patterns on his thought and institutions, and serves as a determining influence in the culture and civilization of his world. It becomes explicit for the reflective thinker in his endeavor to search out what life means, and how his world of persons and of things come to be what they are to him. Finally, it is what the philosopher seeks to grasp in systematic completeness, and transmit for the benefit of others.

' But if we embrace the whole as a unity,' explained Friederich Albrecht Lange, ' then in the act of synthesis we bring our own nature into the object, just as we shape the landscape that we gaze at into harmony, however much disharmony in particulars may be concealed by it. All comprehension follows aesthetic principles, and every step toward the whole is a step toward the ideal.' Not only in æsthetic judgment, but in all judgments of value we discover most subtle and ingenious ways in which life brings the law of its own being into the process of making experience conform to its inner needs. The ' better ' and the ' worse,' which meant so much to Socrates, have become in the course of time a numerous family, as life has deepened, and as experience has revealed what the specifically human quality required. ' Better ' and ' worse ' are, of course, changeless meanings, but there are more ways of being better and worse than there were in Socrates' time, and greater likelihood of changing estimates of what is better and what is worse as circumstances vary. These distinctions of value, for the most part, arise in us spontaneously, when the occasion for appreciation is presented; and when they do, they appear to us as a species of self-revelation. For the nature of a thing determines its needs, and its needs determine the nature and scope of its appreciations. All philosophy — indeed, all human history — is a confession, sometimes an unconscious and involuntary confession, that it is these appreciative references to the various kinds of excellence, and the building of them into the various forms of culture, that give our civilization all that we prize in it.

In an earlier chapter was noted the familiar complaint that after twenty-five centuries of speculation and system building we have no authentic philosophy comparable to the exact sciences of chemistry, physics, mathematics, and astronomy. The answer there given was that science and philosophy have incommensurable tasks, follow widely different methods, and have objectives which lie in different directions. It was further pointed out that a problem of interpretation, because of what it aims to do, must ever remain an open problem, for at any time an access of knowledge or of appreciation may make reinterpretation imperative. For philosophy is affected not only by the culture and achievements of advancing civilization, but by the spiritual needs — the hopes and aspirations of humanity as well.

In view of these considerations, the achievements of philosophy cannot be said to be few, nor can they be ignored as insignificant. Philosophy, during its whole course, has consistently endeavored to interpret life to itself; it has revealed to life what it was blindly reaching out after, and it has made articulate what it only dumbly felt. It has looked understandingly on the instinctive impulses, and has shown how they may be made to minister to a richer and larger life. With infinite patience and in great detail, it has exhibited the power of thought to bring clearness and distinctness into man's muddied experience, and to bring order and system and confident control into the world he lives in. It has even helped to forge the intellectual tools for science, with which to exploit the forces of nature for the good of all. It has taught, often with rare insight, and even by its blundering over-confidence, that life has heights and depths that intellect cannot reach, that in matters of faith and hope

> Our knowledge is a torch of smoky pine
> That lights the pathway but a step ahead,

and while in the conduct of life, wisdom — vision is the principal thing,

> It is not wisdom to be only wise
> And on the inward vision close the eyes,
> It is best wisdom to believe the heart.

Philosophy has discovered that the spirit in man has imperative needs, and that fortune never smiles for long on those who disown, or who trifle with, the living forces within. It has abundantly shown that life tends to break down under its own weight, unless sustained by devotion to an end that lies above and beyond its mere private concerns; that vogue and self-indulgence are poor substitutes for the satisfactions of a well-ordered life. Thoughts such as these have been, through the years, philosophy's contribution to the spiritual foundations of Western civilization.

Socrates was stirred by the thought that the order of nature is a rational order — that it is all compact of selective conditions. Professor Woodbridge has recently reminded us of Aristotle's happy phrasing of the same thought in the words: nature is a realm of proprieties. And both Socrates and Aristotle meant that man, too, was such a realm, and that the inner proprieties of his nature give pattern to his life, determine for him his destiny and the conditions for his well-being. What philosophy has accomplished in these twenty-four hundred years has been won under the guidance of that thought.

And the various points of view, and the different interpretations of speculative thought? Over a hundred years ago Hegel gave the one sufficient answer to that question: ' Every philosophy has been, and still is, necessary. None have passed away, and all are affirmatively contained as elements in a whole. No philosophy has been refuted. What has been refuted has not been the principle of this philosophy, but merely the claim that this principle should be considered final and absolute in character. . . . Our attitude toward any philosophy must thus contain an affirmative and a negative; when we take both of these into consideration, we do justice to a philosophy for the first time.'

There is for the reader the further suggestion of appreciation in the thought of Hegel — a suggestion too often ignored by the critical thinker, dazed by his own insights. Life feeds on its appreciations; and the consolations of philosophy, with all its flaws, are among life's richest treasures. Fifty years ago it was said that a man's education was not completed until he had read Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason.* The old Roman Stoic, Seneca, tutor to Nero, to his sorrow, and needing his philosophy to live and die by, was more catholic in his appreciations: ' The only men who are truly at leisure, and really living are those who are devoted to the study of wisdom. Indeed, they are not only guardians of their own careers, but they are adding all eternity to their store; whatever years have gone before them are to be counted as their property, and if we are not most unappreciative, these noble pioneers in high thinking were born for our benefit and fashioned their lives for our sakes. We are brought to consider things of the greatest worth which have been dug up from darkness into daylight by the efforts of others; to no period of history are we forbidden access, and we are admitted everywhere. If by greatness of soul we may pass beyond the narrow confines of human frailty, we have unlimited time through which we may course. We may share in the thoughts of all the philosophers.'

The consolations of philosophy in Seneca's day were indeed not small. They enabled him in his perplexities to become the captain of his soul, and to find the way of escape from the terrors and defeats of life by linking his destiny with the majesty of universal law. In the almost two thousand years, from the time the teachings of Jesus entered the stream of human life, the heritage of reflective wisdom has increased with the effort of philosophy to keep pace with the ever-widening range of experience. In the long stretch of time, life's pattern has been reflected in the thoughts and sentiments and in the strivings of mankind, and has been preserved in the records of philosophy. The findings of age-long experimentation in the science of living — the careful reasonings and insights of thinkers along with the half-truths, the impasses and pitfalls that they discovered — they are all recorded. And who shall say which of these are more important for the wayfarer on the journey of life? In Seneca's remembered words: philosophy is the guide of life.

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